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ABSTRACT

The School Team Facilitator assists participating New England secondary schools in planning and implementing improvement efforts based on school effectiveness research. This publication, distributed at a team training conference, begins with the conference schedule, a list of facilitators, instructions on choosing a school team, and letters to teachers and principals. The next section, titled "Concepts," contains reprints of articles from "American Education" and "Educational Leadership." These are: "Effective Schools: Accumulating Research Findings" (Michael Cohen); "Classroom Management and Learning" (Jere E. Brophy); "The Effective Principal" (Judith Warren Little); "Guidelines for Improving Teacher Quality" (Gary A. Griffin); "How Teachers' Expectations Affect Results" (Thomas L. Good); "The Role of Testing in Effective Schools" (Andrew C. Porter); and "Academic Press: Translating High Expectations into School Policies and Classroom Practices" (Joseph F. Murphy and others). These are followed by "Approaching the Research on Effective Schools and Effective Classrooms" (a working draft compiled by Thomas Mullikin). The next section, entitled "Tools and Strategies," includes "Quality Circles" (Larry Chase); and "How to Be a Good Facilitator" (Michael Doyle and David Strauss); a series of guides for working with groups; and single sheets for planning and scheduling. A team leader bibliography concludes the document. (MLF)

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# THE NEW ENGLAND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS PROJECT

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1983

# A FACILITATOR'S SOURCEBOOK

Prepared by the
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# Effective Schools: Accumulating Research Findings

First in a series about recent education research to find out what effective schools actually do to raise achievement levels

By Michael Cohen

Since the mid-1960s public concerns over how to use educational resources effectively and to open up educational opportunities for poor and minority children has led to a concentrated effort by educational researchers and other social scientists to identify characteristics of schools and classrooms that help improve learning and achievement. This 15-year effort, largely supported by federal research funds, has led to a body of research findings that the practicing teacher or school administrator should find useful. It also has improved the ability of researchers to ask the appropriate questions, thereby increasing the prospects for further progress.

The landmark study in this area is the *Equality of Educational Opportunity Report* done in 1966 by James Coleman and his colleagues.[1] Based on a national survey of principals, teachers, and students in some 4,000 public elementary and secondary schools, the study examined characteristics of schools (e.g., physical facilities, curriculums, and instructional materials), their staffs (e.g., teacher training, experience, ability, and attitudes), and their students (e.g., socioeconomic and racial or ethnic background). The most frequently cited finding from this study has been that, when compared to the influence of family background, these different school characteristics have relatively little influence on the measured achievements of pupils.

The data actually showed that, first, there was an association between family background and pupil performance—that is, middle and upper class students did better in school than their peers from less well-off backgrounds. Second, students' achievement test scores depended more on their family background than on whether they attended a school with more or less of the kinds of characteristics and resources measured in the study.

This finding was widely misinterpreted as meaning that "schools don't make a difference"—that there is nothing that schools can do to overcome the educational disadvantages produced by minority group status and poverty. And this misinterpretation ran counter to the prevailing beliefs of educators, researchers, and the public, for it directly challenged the belief that schools could serve as a vehicle for social mobility, by providing the necessary skills to enable the disadvantaged to achieve success in the labor market.

Paradoxically the Coleman Report's findings and their popular misinterpretation were themselves a direct result of another set of prevailing beliefs. This belief was that the educationally relevant characteristics of schools could be described by reference to such characteristics as the number of books in the school library, the age of the building and its facilities, the availability of science laboratories, the presence of certain types of specialists such as school nurses and psychologists, and, at the secondary level, the availability of a range of curricular offerings. While library books, specialists, and curricular offerings *are* important features of schools, we have learned from subsequent research that other aspects of the schooling process make powerful contributions to student learning.

At the time, however, the research caused considerable controversy and resulted in a number of attempts by researchers to re-analyze the study data, and to replicate (or refute) the findings in other

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Mr. Cohen is Team Leader of the Effective Schools Team and Senior Associate at the National Institute of Education.

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## ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

The Northeast Regional Exchange, Inc., (NEREX, Inc.), a private not-for-profit corporation founded in 1981, is a service agency that seeks to promote educational equity and improvement by coordinating resources and sharing information among the seven states of the Northeast based on an established set of state and regional priorities. By providing information, technical assistance, and training, NEREX, Inc. serves State Departments of Education and their clients: local school districts, intermediate service agencies, and other organizations with a vested interest in the improvement of education for children and adults. The Northeast Regional Exchange works collaboratively with other regional and national research, development and service organizations by linking with existing educational networks to increase services of those organizations within the region. Through NEREX, states are able to expand their available resource base and work through regional sharing efforts toward program improvement.

The Northeast Regional Exchange, Inc. is governed by a 15-member Board of Directors that includes the seven Chief State School Officers from the Northeast and eight representatives from a wide variety of education constituency groups in the region. The NEREX, Inc. also draws expertise from task forces that focus on individual NEREX priorities identified by the Board.

The Northeast Regional Exchange, Inc. specifically focuses its re-sources on three regional priorities. These three priorities are:

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| Curriculum: | Basic Skills - Writing<br>Mathematics and Science |
| Instructional Technology: | Computer Technology and Software |
| Leadership | Current Issues in Teaching<br>Effective Schools |

The Northeast Regional Exchange, Inc. also assists individual states to plan and provide services within the state department and/or to local school districts in areas of specific statewide priorities. These projects include School Effectiveness; Leadership and Management Training; Computer Literacy and Training; and Successful Business Practices. A regional Policy Strand and Cross State Sharing further enhance the services provided by NEREX, Inc. to individual states.

The regional and state services provided by NEREX are in part supported by a grant from the National Institute of Education. The NEREX has successfully obtained additional funds for activities that compliment the mission and priorities of the Exchange. These activities include a National Study of Exemplary Mathematics Programs, the Development of the Regional Effective Schools Training Network, and the Development of an International Education Resource Bank.

Some of the products of the Exchange include:

- "Administering Writing Programs: A Workshop Leader's Handbook"
- "Teachers Writing to Teachers: Writing As A Way of Observing, Learning and Teaching"

- "Writing to Learn: A Resource Notebook for Teachers"

- "Microcomputers in Education: An Introduction"
- "Technology Programs that Work"
- "The Evaluation of Educational Microcomputer Software: A Guide to Guides"

- "Computer Literacy: An Introduction"
- "Resources for Computer Instruction"

- "Effective Schools: A Positive Force in the Northeast"
- "Effective Schooling in a Rural Context: A New Hampshire View"
- "Critical Issues in Teacher Education: From a State Perspective"

- "Business-Industry-Education - Toward A Working Partnership"

The Northeast Regional Exchange is particularly successful in attracting documented in-kind services from states and other service agencies. During the first two years, the in-kind match for regional and state services was equal to grant money appropriated for the provision of those services.

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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**
REGION I
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OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY'S REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

To the SCHOOL TEAM FACILITATORS:

On behalf of the U.S. Secretary of Education, I want to congratulate the New England Commissioners of Education and their departments for their outstanding commitment to the success of the New England Regional School Effectiveness Project. Their support is illustrated by the assignment of state department staff to the important role of School Team Facilitator, a significant partner with the participating secondary schools, to assist them in planning and implementing improvement efforts based on school effectiveness research. We hope this training and support program will further strengthen state and local capacities for improving the learning climate of schools and increasing the achievement of their students.

This regional project is one of a number of initiatives the U.S. Department of Education has undertaken under the Secretary's goal of providing leadership to promote more effective learning and enhance excellence in education. The planning and implementation of this activity exemplifies the cooperative relationship which exists in New England among the state departments of education, the Region I office of the U.S. Department of Education, and the Northeast Regional Exchange, Inc. (NEREX), a regional education services organization based in Chelmsford, Massachusetts. This project's success is the direct result of the regional collaboration which has characterized its entire development. I am grateful for the unstinting efforts of the project's Steering Committee, composed of state department of education staff, and NEREX's Executive Director, J. Lynn Griesemer, and Resources Coordinator, Douglas S. Fleming, in the policy setting, planning, and implementation of this activity. I would like to thank my own staff for their leadership and contributions -- Nancy Taylor, Project Coordinator, and Roland L. Perry, Program Specialist.

You, as a School Team Facilitator, share a key responsibility with the team members from your participating school, and an exciting challenge as well -- to tap the rich human resources available in a faculty committed to making their school a better learning environment for their students and themselves -- and to help direct those resources towards improvement. I want to express my appreciation for the time and energy you are devoting to the project. Your contribution will greatly enhance its accomplishments.

I'm proud to play a part in this exciting opportunity, and wish you and your school team great success.

A. Wayne Roberts
A Wayne Roberts
Secretary's Regional Representative
U.S. Department of Education
Region I

# Acknowledgments

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# Introduction

## New England Regional School Effectiveness Project
## School-Based Teams Training

May 3-5, 1983
Sheraton-Wayfarer Inn, Bedford, NH

### Tuesday May 3: School Effectiveness and Secondary Schools

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| 8:00 am | Registration |
| 10:00 - 11:15 | Plenary Session: Introductions and Setting the Stage<br>- Greetings: A. Wayne Roberts, Secretary's Regional Representative U.S. Dept. of Education, Region I<br>Robert Brunelle, State Commissioner of Education, New Hampshire<br>- Conference Goals: Thomas J. Burns Director of Dissemination U.S. Dept. of Education, Region I |
| 10:30 | Keynote Speaker: Michael Cohen, Senior Research Associate, U.S. Dept. of Education, National Institute of Education<br>Research Findings on School Effectiveness and Implications for Secondary Schools |
| 11:15 - 12:45 | School-Based Team Sessions I: facilitated discussion to review school data, share perceptions |
| 12:45 - 2:00 pm | Lunch<br>Greetings: Mary Jean LeTendre, Special Assistant to U.S. Secretary of Education |
| 2:00 - 4:30 | School-Based Team Sessions II: further data analysis and problem identification |
| 4:30 - 5:30 | Free Time |
| 5:30 | Dinner |
| 7:00 - 8:30 | Concurrent Sessions: three presentations by Resource Persons on school effectiveness research findings and implications for secondary schools:<br>. Time on Task/Engaged Time<br>. Teacher Expectations<br>. Monitoring Student Progress |
| 8:30 - 9:00 | Meeting of School Team Facilitators: debrief |
| 9:00 - 10:00 pm | Cracker Barrel Hour: informal gathering with wine and cheese |

## Wednesday May 4: Developing an Action Plan

| | |
|---|---|
| 8:00 am | Registration (until 10:30) |
| 8:15 - 9:15 | Plenary Session: Developing an Action Plan<br>William Gauthier<br>Chief, Bureau of School and Program Development<br>Connecticut State Department of Education |
| 9:15 - 12:15 | School-Based Team Sessions III: complete problem identification process and set priorities |
| 12:15 - 1:30 pm | Lunch |
| 1:30 - 4:30 | School-Based Team Sessions IV: develop an action plan(s) |
| 3:00 - 4:30 | Concurrent Sessions (3-4 presentations by Resource Persons on):<br>. New Administrators<br>. Security and Discipline<br>. Maturing Faculty<br>. Staff Development |
| 4:30 - 5:00 | Meeting of School Team Facilitators: debrief |
| 4:30 - 6:30 | Free Time |
| 6:30 pm | Dinner |
| | No formal evening session is planned in order that team work in progress can continue. |

Resource Persons available for consultation with teams

## Thursday May 5: Strategies for Introducing Change in Organizations

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|---|---|
| 8:30 - 9:30 am | Plenary Session: Strategies for Introducing Change in Organizations<br>Bud Meyers<br>Senior Research Associate<br>Center for Evaluation and Policies Research<br>University of Vermont |
| 9:30 - 11:30 | School-Based Team Sessions V: complete action plan, including school re-entry strategies |
| 11:30 - 1:00 | Plenary Session: Teams report outcomes on how the process worked for them; closure and next steps |
| 1:00 pm | Adjourn |
| 2:00 - 3:00 | Meeting of School Team Facilitators: debrief (lunch provided). |

## New England Regional School Effectiveness Project
## School Team Facilitators

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## Choosing a School Team

The Problem-Solving Institute utilizes school teams as the basic work structure. This team, with the assistance of a group facilitator, is charged with analyzing and discussing the data collected, setting goals for improvement, examining alternative improvement strategies and designing plans for improvement. It is extremely important that this team have a "healthy birth". The procedures and processes used for team selection must be clear, flexible, sup- tive of risk-taking and allow for a broad base of input.

When beginning the team selection process the following factors should considered:

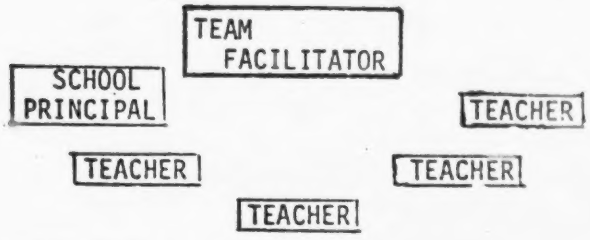
A. Clearly communicate both verbally and in writing the tasks and time commitments of involvement. Establish the reasons why a team is needed and wanted.

B. Extend invitations to all school members with the opportunity to gracefully decline - offer other avenues for involvement that will help in follow-through and implementation.

C. Address personal concerns people might have about being involved in a team process: who supports and finances the project? Is there an opportunity for inservice credits? (if your district has such a policy)? How will planning sessions be scheduled? - during school, after school.

A team should be selected with the idea of "pooling information from a variety of organizational vantage points" and opinions. "Through collaborative participation in decision-making, an increased sense of psychological ownership can be developed within a team, making it likely that action plans, once decided upon, will be fully implemented by team members".[1] A school involved in a school improvement process does not benefit from selecting its most negative teachers in the hopes that it will change their attitude. However, neither does a school benefit from choosing those same work horses who get tapped for every committee and project.

The school team must be chaired by the school principal, who will, in concert with the team facilitator, lead the group through the problem-solving steps.



Example of Institute Work Group

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[1] Schwartz, M., Steefel, N., Schmuck, R. The Development of Educational Teams. Oregon: Center for Educational Policy and Management, 1976.

## TO THE TEACHER

Teachers contemplating entering into a school improvement project experience a broad spectrum of feelings about this prospect for change. Some are excited about the opportunity to make positive changes. Some are fearful that this process will force them to make changes that they are not ready or willing to make. Some are skeptical about the chances for success, and worried about committing their time and energy to an effort with questionable outcomes. Understandably, most teachers probably experience varying blends of these hopes and concerns.

If you are being asked to become involved in a school improvement project, what you do before making that decision is as important as any step of the process that follows. Going blindly into such a project expecting immediate improvements will more than likely lead to disappointment. Prematurely denying your commitment may rob you and your students of the opportunity to have a more instructionally effective school. Change is a process, not an event. It takes place over a long period of time. It is crucial that you understand the process and its demands on you before making your decision to become involved. What kind of commitment does a school improvement project require of teachers? First of all, it requires some commitment of time from all staff. Depending on your degree of involvement, the amount of time will vary. All teachers will be asked to devote up to an hour for interviews or questionnaires. If you then become a member of the school improvement team, the time involved is substantial. Are you in a position to make this commitment of time?

Participation in this process involves taking a close look at your school and examining its strengths and weaknesses to determine what areas can be improved to increase instructional effectiveness. During the assessment phase of the process, you and your colleagues will be asked to evaluate the quality of instructional leadership in your building. All of the research points to the principal as a key factor in the effectiveness of the school. Can you offer that information honestly and constructively? Are you willing to support the efforts of your principal who will be the leader of this school improvement process?

In addition to examining instructional leadership, the school improvement process focuses on other important factors. You as a teacher will be asked to look at your own role and the role of your colleagues in the effectiveness of your school. What kind of expectations do you have regarding the level of achievement of your students? Do you feel that you and other teachers in your school have the ability to provide the instructional program that will allow all students to master basic skills? Do you provide adequate time for direct instruction so that students can master the objectives being taught? These can be difficult, sensitive areas to probe. For some, the results will provide a unique opportunity to affirm the positive aspects that exist now in the school and to take a serious look at areas ripe for change. Are you willing to take an honest look at yourself and your school?

It is understandable and sensible that you would be hesitant to enter into a process that is unknown to you. Before going any further, ask for clarification of all your questions. Voice all of your concerns before making or withholding your commitment. You have a right to expect that you will be dealt with openly and honestly throughout this process. Be as sure as you can ahead of time that this will happen.

There will always be a degree of uncertainty involved in a process such as this. No one can say honestly to you at this point that the results of this project will meet all of your expectations. The basic questions you must deal with after becoming informed is - how do your concerns balance against the promising outcomes of increased levels of student achievement? It is a difficult question involving many factors. But only after considering all of them will you be able to make an intelligent decision.

# TO THE PRINCIPAL

The school principal who is interested in initiating a school improvement project faces an exciting, threatening, promising, time-consuming, hopeful, painful challenge. Presumably, all principals would like their schools to become more instructionally effective and their students to reach higher levels of academic achievement. But school leaders should not undertake any project for which they and their staff are not prepared. Nor should they attempt to begin a change process to which they and their staff are not fully committed. The question is, "Should you?"

A school improvement process impacts different groups within the school building in very different ways. You, in your unique role as instructional leader, will feel this impact more than any other individual.

All of the research points to you as the key factor in the level of effectiveness of your school. Some questions to ask before proceeding any further are: Are you personally ready to take an honest look at your school? Are you willing to examine its strengths and weaknesses to determine what areas can be improved in order to increase its effectiveness? This necessarily involves taking an honest look at yourself and your role as instructional leader. It also involves having your staff evaluate the effectiveness of your instructional leadership. How effective is the communication in your building? How well do you supervise the monitoring of pupil progress? Does your staff perceive you as a supportive person from whom they can expect and receive guidance and encouragement? For some principals, hearing how their staff responds to such questions can be an enlightening experience from which they gain useful knowledge - knowledge that can reinforce what is already working well, and knowledge that can become the basis for change. There is no question that you are leaving yourself open to criticism when you ask questions such as these. Are you willing to accept this criticism?

In addition to affecting you on a personal level, the school improvement process touches everyone in your building. Change will not take place because the principal announces it. Change is a process which takes place over a long period of time. Not everyone will be at the same level of readiness or have the same degree of commitment to the process. Individuals will have different kinds of concerns which will affect their attitudes and abilities to change. If you are sensitive to these concerns and anticipate them, you can minimize fear, resentment, and indifference. Keeping your entire staff informed of progress throughout this process is a crucial way of responding to their concerns. Are you willing to share information openly and honestly with your staff? Are you willing to work to get their commitment? Are you willing to accept and work with people at their level of readiness?

It is difficult to measure the time commitment, hard work, and inevitable problems involved in undertaking a school improvement process against the promising outcome of increased levels of achievement for all students in your school. Deciding whether to become involved at all is probably the most important process decision you will make. To go blindly into the process with expectations of rapid improvements is to insure failure. Anticipating problems as well as benefits will enable you and your staff to decide intelligently.

# Concepts

studies.[2] While it is unnecessary to go into the details of the scholarly debate in this article, it is useful to understand how the criticisms raised in the ensuing debate helped point to more productive directions for subsequent research.

## What About Schools is Important?

Specifically, two major problems were identified in the Coleman Report and other similar studies.[3] First, the types of school factors measured in these studies refer primarily to the types and levels of resources *present* or *available* in the school—human resources (specialists, teacher ability, experience, and training), instructional resources (textbooks, library books, science equipment, etc.), and financial resources (per pupil expenditures). In reality, comparing schools on the resources available to them is not as meaningful as comparing schools on how well they *organize* and *use* their available resources—on how well teachers and specialists coordinate their work together, how well teachers and students make use of the time available to them for instructional activities, and on how well teachers motivate their students and reinforce their efforts.

This is not to suggest that the level of resources available to schools is unimportant—for it is difficult to imagine a good school without the necessary resources to pay for books and supplies, teacher salaries, etc. Further, there is growing evidence to indicate that the supplies and services purchased with compensatory education funds have been effective in increasing the achievement levels of low income students.[4]

Second, the Coleman Report and other studies made comparisons among schools on their *average* achievement level. Overlooked was the fact that within a typical school there is a wide range of achievement levels. At elementary schools, for example, some fourth graders might be reading at the sixth grade level or above, while other fourth graders read at the first grade level. Additionally, by attempting to explain differences among schools in their average level of student achievement, researchers assumed that all school resources were equally available to, and utilized by, each of the students in the school. Yet we know that within a school, a student does not experience the "average teacher," but, rather a particular set of teachers, who differ from one another in regard to teaching styles, competence, and effectiveness. Similarly, some students benefit from contact with particular specialists, courses, or library books, while other pupils in the same school may never come into contact with these resources. Also, students are often grouped into classes, tracks, or ability groups, and thus are exposed to varying teacher skills, curriculum materials, and social environments.[5]

Consequently, the combined result of these problems was that much of the early research was not sufficiently sensitive to important things that happened to individual students within the school. Therefore, the research was only partially effective at identifying and describing things that really mattered for improving the instructional effectiveness of schools. Nonetheless, these early studies and the debates surrounding them were useful in sharpening the strategies employed in subsequent studies to learn what about schools may make a difference. More recent inquiry differs from, and improves upon, previous research in a number of respects.

First, in addition to comparing different schools and their influence on student learning, the differences among classrooms within a school have been studied.[6] By making the classroom the unit of analysis, researchers were able to get closer to the educational environment actually experienced by a student.

Second, rather than studying relatively static *characteristics* of educational environments (e.g., the level of training and certification of a particular teacher), researchers began to examine much more complex and dynamic *processes* in schools and classrooms (e.g., what a teacher actually does in the classroom over a period of time). So, for example, studies were conducted which examined how teachers organized and managed their classrooms, and the ways in which teachers managed and minimized disruptions in their classrooms.[7] Other inquiry focused directly on the nature of teacher-student interactions and communications, examining the ways in which teachers presented information, asked questions, and communicated goals, expectations, and rules to their students.[8] And, importantly, investigators began to conceive of time as an important school resource, and studied how time was used in classrooms.[9] For example, researchers have learned that some teachers may allow 45 minutes of classroom time each day to teach reading, while others may allocate as much as 75 minutes. Further, some teachers will be more efficient in their use of time, so that their students will spend 80 percent of the time for reading actually reading. Other teachers, however, are less efficient at managing the classroom so that students are actually engaged in appropriate learning activities only 50-60 percent of the time.

Third, the focus of this recent research has increasingly been on identifying and describing practices, at both the classroom and the school level, which are particularly effective at improving the achievement levels of students from poor and minority backgrounds.[10] Doing so involved identifying teachers or schools which, over a period of years, consistently produced students scoring well on achievement tests. These teachers or schools then were carefully matched with other teachers or schools also serving students from predominantly poor and minority backgrounds, with less success at realizing high levels of student achievement. Through contrasting instructional approaches, learning environments, and the behaviors of teachers and administrators, it was possible to identify those educational practices that contribute to instructional effectiveness.

## Research in the Schools

Fourth, as a result of adopting the strategies described above, researchers have come to rely increasingly on first-hand observation and concrete descriptions of educational practices. They are more likely to conduct indepth interviews with teachers, principals, and students, rather than to rely exclusively on survey questionnaires typically administered in large groups or through the mails. A corresponding change was a general shift to studies with smaller samples—studies of fewer schools or classrooms, but with the advantage of being able to provide richer and more thorough descriptions and analyses of the complexities of daily life in these settings.

Finally, researchers increasingly are collaborating with practicing educators in conducting their research. In many studies teachers and other practitioners play a significant role in framing research questions, shaping useful research designs, and interpreting research results. For example, a team of teachers, staff developers, and researchers in a California school district jointly planned, designed, and conducted a study to identify strategies and techniques classroom teachers could use to cope effectively with distractions from instruction.[11]

## The Picture Now

Especially since 1972, when the Congress created the National Institute of Education, the Education Department's principal educational research agency, these strategies have increasingly characterized studies conducted to identify characteristics of schools and classrooms which contribute to instructional effectiveness. By now, enough research has been conducted, and enough findings have been successfully replicated, to permit a synthesis. A number of Effective Schools studies suggest that differences in effectiveness among schools, defined in terms of student performance on tests of basic skills, can be accounted for by the following five factors:[12]

- Strong administrative leadership by the school principal, especially in regard to instructional matters;
- A school climate conducive to learning; i.e., a safe and orderly school free of discipline and vandalism problems;
- School-wide emphasis on basic skills instruction, which entails agreement among the professional staff that instruction in the basic skills is the primary goal of the school;
- Teacher expectations that students can reach high levels of achievement, regardless of pupil background; and
- A system for monitoring and assessing pupil performance which is tied to instructional objectives.

While this is not an exhaustive list of the practices that promote school effectiveness, they seem quite sensible. They imply that a school in which the principal and instructional staff agree on what they're doing, believe they can do it, provide an environment conducive to accomplishing the task, and monitor their effectiveness and adjust performance based upon such feedback, is likely to be an effective one. Confidence in these factors is strengthened further by the similarities between these school level factors and several features of effective practice identified by research focusing specifically at the classroom level.[13] More specifically, research at both the classroom and the school level highlight the importance of commitment to basic skills as instructional goals. This research stresses the need for an orderly, businesslike environment which permits teachers and students to devote their time and energy to teaching and learning academic content. The need for mechanisms for systematically and frequently assessing student performance in the basic skills, which provides feedback to both teachers and pupils regarding their success, is identified in both sets of studies. And finally, the notion that successful instruction is, in part, a function of teachers' beliefs that such success is possible for themselves and their students, is supported by both lines of inquiry.

## The Current State of Knowledge

Of necessity, the preceeding paragraphs have provided only a brief outline of the major research findings. Any one of the factors described above is the result of a large number of research studies, and is simply a shorthand device indicating a highly condensed version of a much larger and more detailed story about effective educational practices. In order to provide readers with a more thorough understanding of our current knowledge base, as well as the areas in which additional research contributions are needed, subsequent issues of *American Education* will include a series of five articles that describe the research in greater detail. Each of these articles will summarize the current state of knowledge for its respective topic, will illustrate recently completed or ongoing research studies, and will spell out in greater detail the implications of research findings for educational practice. Each of the articles is based upon, and illustrative of, research projects recently funded by the National Institute of Education.

Based on the findings of research on effective schools and effective classrooms, five topics have been selected for this series. While these topics don't perfectly mirror the five factors from the Effective Schools research described above, they are consistent with those factors and, by drawing on a somewhat broader range of research studies, both deepen and extend their meaning and application. The first article in this series will review and summarize recent research on classroom management, summarizing the best of what is known about how teachers can most effectively manage their classrooms and create educational environments most conducive to learning. The next article will focus explicitly on teacher expectations, describing what has been learned in this area. It will describe how teachers communicate their performance expectations to students, as well as discuss how students form their own expectations for how well they can do in school. The third article will describe a recently completed study of successful schools which identifies strategies principals can use to provide effective instructional leadership. A fourth article will describe ongoing research on testing, indicating what has been learned about the use of achievement tests to improve instructional effectiveness. Finally, the fifth article will describe research conducted in an effort to translate the findings of classroom management studies into an effective staff development program for teachers.

Though much has been learned from recent research, our understanding of what constitutes effective practice, and of what conditions are necessary in order for practices identified as effective to work in particular school settings, is incomplete. Additionaly, there is still work to be done in identifying the most useful applications of research findings for educators. The challenge now will be to find the most effective ways of enabling schools to take advantage of new knowledge. Just as the early studies of school effectiveness provided the groundwork for generating our current research findings, so too will the existing knowledge base provide a helpful point of departure for addressing these additional research questions. ★

## NOTES

[1] James S. Coleman et al., *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966).

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[3] Michael Cohen, "Recent Advances in Our Understanding of School Effects Research," invited address presented at Annual Meeting of American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, Chicago, Illinois, March 1, 1979.

[4] For example, see Phyllis Levenstein et al., *Summary Report: Lasting Effects After Preschool* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979); National Institute of Education, *The Effects of Services on Student Development* (Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education, 1977).

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[6] For example, see Thomas Good, Bruce Biddle and Jere Brophy, *Teachers Make a Difference* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975); Richard J. Murnane, *The Impact of School Resources on the Learning of Inner City Children* (Cambridge: Ballinger Publishing Co., 1975); and Anita Summers and Barbara Wolfe, "Equality of Educational Opportunity Qualified: A Production Function Approach," *Philadelphia Federal Reserve Bank Papers*, 1974.

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[9] For example, see Carolyn Denham and Ann Lieberman, eds. *Time To Learn* (Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education, 1980); and David E. Wiley and Annegret Harnischfeger, "Explosion of a Myth: Quantity of Schooling and Exposure to Instruction, Major Educational Vehicles," *Educational Researcher 3:4, 7–12*, 1974.

[10] For example, see Wilbur Brookover et al., *Schools Can Make a Difference*, College of Urban Development, Michigan State University, 1977; and George Weber, *Inner City Children Can Be Taught to Read: Four Successful Schools*. Occasional Papers, No. 18 (Washington, D.C.: Council for Basic Education, 1971).

[11] William J. Tikunoff, Beatrice A. Ward and Gary A. Griffin, *Interactive Research and Development on Teaching Study Final Report* (San Francisco: Far West Laboratory for Research and Development, 1979); Grant Behnke et al., "Coping with Classroom Distractions," *Elementary School Journal* 81:3, 135-155, 1981.

[12] For example, see Ronald Edmonds, "Some Schools Work and More Can," *Social Policy*, March/April 1979; and Michael Cohen, "Effective Schools: What the Research Says," *Today's Education* 70:2, 46-49, 1980.

[13] Jere Brophy, "Advances in Teacher Effectiveness Research," *Journal of Classroom Interaction* 15: 1-7, 1979.

# RESEARCH

# Classroom Management and Learning

Recent research is proving what every teacher knows: That planning and constant vigilance are the price of effective teaching. Data from detailed classroom observations are defining the methods any teacher can use to maintain a "learning environment"

By Jere E. Brophy

eachers, principals, and teacher educators have long recognized classroom management skills as essential to teaching success and have stressed these skills in rating teachers. In addition, reviews of recent research on teaching (Brophy, 1979; Good, 1979; Rosenshine, 1979) have concluded that classroom management skills are associated not only with student attention and time on task but with student achievement in basic skills. Teachers who organize and manage classrooms effectively create a good learning environment.

Yet, even though effective classroom management is central to effective teaching, few teacher education programs systematically instruct their students in how to manage classrooms effectively. Part of the reason why hinges on the complexity of classroom management. It does not fit cleanly within any one of the traditional education disciplines (curriculum and instruction, foundations, educational psychology, special education, etc.), involving, instead, several of the disciplines.

Thus, classroom management has tended to slip through the cracks of traditionally organized teacher education programs. And until recently there was no scientific knowledge base upon which teacher educators could draw in developing systematic instruction in classroom management. There were two main sources of ideas: practitioners' common sense suggestions and "bag of tricks" tips, and suggestions from learning theorists, psychotherapists, and various social scientists whose ideas might or might not be useful in the classroom.

The situation has improved dramatically in the last ten years, as sources of advice to teachers have converged on a common core of ideas, many of which have been validated in typical classroom settings (see detailed review by Brophy and Putnam, 1979). This paper presents some highlights from this body of information, and describes some of the research that has contributed to it.

## Preparation, Organization, and Prevention

Too often, "classroom management" is equated with "discipline," "control," or other terms that connote stopping unacceptable behavior by setting and enforcing firm limits. This connotation is unfortunate because research on classroom management regularly indicates the need to stress prevention over remediation. It is important for teachers to know how to deal with student behavior problems when they occur, but the crucial classroom management skills appear to be those involved in planning, organizing, and maintaining a learning environment that engages

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students in productive activities, thus lessening the need to deal with problems in the first place. Reactive response to student misconduct is but a small part of effective classroom management. The major part involves active teacher planning and decision-making focused on setting up a functional physical environment, matching curriculum and instruction to student needs, and establishing efficient routines for handling everyday housekeeping and logistics.

Wise practitioners have known this all along: Kounin (1970) and his colleagues demonstrated it conclusively in classroom research. They videotaped two types of classrooms. The first type functioned remarkably smoothly, seemingly automatically. Students were attentive to lessons and engaged in seatwork. Transitions between activities were brief and orderly. The teachers, enjoying excellent cooperation from the students, were able to accomplish whatever they needed to do with minimum time and effort. In contrast to these successful classroom managers, the teachers in the comparison classrooms were fighting to keep the lid on. Activities suffered from poor attention and frequent disruption. Transitions were lengthy and often chaotic. Much of the teachers' time was spent dealing with student misconduct.

Kounin and his colleagues analyzed the videotapes from these classrooms in detail, concentrating on teachers' methods of dealing with student misconduct and disruptive behavior. Given the striking contrast in classroom management displayed by the two groups of teachers, the researchers expected to see large and systematic differences in methods of dealing with student misconduct. To their surprise, they found no systematic differences at all! Good classroom managers were not notably different from poor classroom managers *when responding to student misconduct.*

Fortunately, the researchers did not stop at this point. In the process of discovering that the two groups of teachers did not differ much in their responses to students who had become disruptive, they noted that the teachers did differ in other ways. In particular, the effective classroom managers systematically did things to minimize the frequency with which students became disruptive in the first place. Some of these teacher behaviors are as follows:

**"With-it-ness:"** Effective managers nipped problems before they could escalate into disruption. They monitored the classroom regularly, stationing themselves where they could see all of the students and scanning all parts of the classroom continuously. This and related behavior let students know that their teachers were "with it"—aware of what was happening at all times and likely to detect inappropriate behavior early and accurately.

**"Overlapping-ness:"** Effective managers had learned to do more than one thing at a time when necessary. When conferring with individual pupils, for example, they would continue to monitor events going on in the rest of the classroom. When teaching reading groups, they dealt with students from outside the group who came to ask questions without disrupting the reading groups. In general, they could handle routine housekeeping tasks and meet individual needs without disrupting the ongoing activities of the class as a whole.

**Signal continuity and momentum in lessons:** Whether teaching the whole class or a small group, effective managers were well prepared and thus able to move through the activity at a brisk pace. There were few interruptions due to failure to bring or prepare a prop, no confusion about what to do next, no need to stop and consult the teacher's manual, no false starts, or no backtracking to present information that should have been presented earlier. Minor, fleeting inattention would be ignored. More serious inattention would be dealt with before it escalated into disruption but in ways that were not themselves disruptive. Thus, these teachers would move near to the inattentive students, use eye contact when possible, direct a question or comment to them, or cue their attention with a brief comment. They would not interrupt the lesson by delivering an extended reprimand or other overreaction.

In general, students tend to be attentive (or their inattention fleeting) when they have a continuous academic "signal" to attend to. Problems tend to set in when they have no clear "signal" to attend to or task to focus on, and such problems tend to multiply in frequency and escalate in intensity the longer the students are left without such a focus.

This study made it clear that the seemingly automatic, smooth functioning observed throughout most of the school year in the classrooms of successful managers resulted from considerable preparation and organization at the beginning of the year. Successful managers spent significant classroom time in the early weeks introducing rules and procedures. Room arrangement, materials storage, and other physical factors had been prepared in advance. On the first day and throughout the first week there was special attention to matters of greatest concern to the students (information about the teacher and classmates, review of the daily schedule, times and practices for lunch and recess, where to put personal materials, how to use the bathroom, when and where to get a drink). Classroom routines were introduced gradually as needed, without overloading students with too much information at one time.

Implementing classroom rules and procedures was more a matter of instruction than "control," although it was important for teachers to follow through on their stated expectations. Effective managers not only told their students what they expected them to do but personally modeled the correct procedures for them, took time to answer questions and resolve ambiguities, and allowed time for practice of some procedures. In short, key procedures were taught to the students in more or less formal lessons, just as academic content is taught.

Effective managers were thorough in following up on their expectations. They reminded students of key aspects of procedures shortly before they were to carry them out, and they would schedule additional instruction and practice when procedures were not carried out properly. Students were monitored carefully and not "turned loose" without careful direction. Consequences of appropriate and inappropriate behavior were clearer than in less effectively managed classrooms and applied more consistently. Inappropriate behavior was stopped more quickly. In general, the more effective managers showed more of three major clusters of behavior:

**Behavior that Conveys Purposefulness:** Students were held accountable for completing work on time (after the teachers taught them to pace themselves using the clock). Regular times were scheduled each day to briefly review independent work (so that difficulties could be identified and follow-up assistance offered quickly). Teachers regularly circulated through the room during seatwork, checking on each student's progress. Completed papers were returned to students as soon as possible, with feedback. In general, effective managers showed concern about using the maximum time available for instruction and about seeing that students learned the content.

**Teaching Students How to Behave Appropriately:** Effective managers were clear about what was expected and what would not be tolerated. In particular, they focused on what students should be doing and, when necessary, on teaching them how to do it. This included not only the "don'ts" involved in keeping order and reasonable quiet in the classroom but also more prescriptive and learning-related behavior such as how to read and follow directions for independent work. Responses to failure to follow these procedures stressed specific corrective feedback rather than criticism or threat of punishment.

**Teacher Skills in Diagnosing Students' Focus of Attention:** Effective managers were sensitive to student concerns, continually monitoring students for signs of confusion or inattention. They arranged desks so that students could easily face the point in the room where they most often focused attention; used variations in voice, movement, and pacing to refocus attention during lessons; scheduled daily activities to take into consideration changes in students' readiness to attend vs. their needs for physical activity; had clear beginnings and endings to activities and efficient transitions between them; and required active attention of all students when important information was being given.

Even after the early weeks of the school year, effective managers continued to maintain their desired routines. While they spent less time on procedural instruction and practice, they continued to give reminders and remedial instruction when necessary and they remained consistent in enforcing their expectations.

Follow-up work at the junior high school level revealed similar differences between effective and ineffective classroom managers—although it was clear that junior high teachers did not not need to put as much emphasis on rules and procedures, particularly how students should follow them. It was especially important, however, for junior high teachers to communicate their expectations clearly and to monitor students for compliance. Procedures for maintaining student responsibility for engaging in and completing work assignments were especially important in junior high school.

Most recently, this research team has followed up their observation research with intervention studies, in which teachers are trained in effective classroom management techniques, using an extremely detailed manual based on their earlier work. These intervention studies showed success in improving teachers' classroom management skills, and consequently, students' task engagement rates. Subsequent to these intervention studies, the training manuals are revised and then made available, at cost, to teachers and teacher educators. The junior high manual is still under revision, but the elementary manual is available (Evertson, Emmer, Clements, Sanford, Worsham, and Williams, 1981).

## Dealing with Chronic Problems

The research reviewed above has yielded detailed and workable principles for classroom organization and group management. If implemented consistently, these principles can enable teachers to establish smooth functioning classrooms. But what about students who present chronic, severe problems that require more intensive or individualized treatment? Researchers at the Institute for Research on Teaching at Michigan State University have been studying this problem by interviewing experienced elementary school teachers working in a variety of settings.

The study focuses on 12 types of chronic student problems that appear frequently in elementary classrooms: low achievement, underachievement, perfectionism, failure syndrome (defeatism and helplessness resulting from repeated failure), hostility and aggression directed against peers, passive-aggressive behaviors directed against the teacher, open defiance of the teacher, hyperactivity, distractibility, immaturity, peer rejection, and social withdrawal.

Participating teachers were nominated by their principals as being either average or outstanding at dealing with these kinds of student problems. They were chosen from among teachers at the school who had had at least three years of experience. These 98 teachers were observed in their classrooms to gain information on their styles and levels of success in dealing with student problems. They were then interviewed in detail about how they handle each of these 12 problem student types and how they would handle each of 24 vignette situations depicting specific incidents that these student types are likely to create in the classroom. Analyses are still in progress, but some information is already available (Brophy and Rohrkemper, 1980, 1981; Rohrkemper and Brophy, 1980).

In general, the more effective teachers include classroom-socializing students and dealing with their problem behavior (in addition to teaching them curriculum content) as part of their definitions of the teacher's role. They accept the challenges that these students present and try to deal with them personally rather than pass them along to the principal or a mental health counselor (although in extreme cases they will call on these professionals to assist in dealing with the problem).

The strategies favored by these effective teachers emphasize long-term problem-solving over short-term control measures. Specifically, instead of (or at least, in addition to) merely trying to control students through firm demands or threats of punishment, these teachers try to identify and work on the causes of the student's problem behavior, to provide support and counseling help, to use environmental restructuring and behavior modification methods to change inappropriate to effective behavior, or to use instruction or modeling to teach students how to cope with problem situations more effectively.

For example, in dealing with failure-syndrome students who have essentially given up attempts to cope with classroom demands, effective teachers refuse to cave in by reducing task demands and treating these students as if they are really unable to succeed in the classroom. Instead, they approach such students with a mixture of sympathy, encouragement, and demands. These teachers reassure the students that they do have ability and that work given will not be too difficult for them. Then, the teachers help them to get started when they are discouraged or need some support, reinforce their progress, and perhaps offer contracts providing rewards for accomplishments and allowing opportunities for students to set goals. In general, the emphasis is on encouragement and help rather than prodding through threat of punishment. Failure-syndrome students are not merely *told* that they can succeed, but *shown* convincingly that they can, and *helped* to do so.

Similar themes are seen in the approach of effective teachers to underachieving students who prefer to socialize or entertain themselves rather than to do their assigned work. In comparison to failure-syndrome students, these underachievers are acting more deliberately and in control when they choose not to do their work, and thus are more blameworthy for their actions. Effective teachers do hold them responsible for these actions, but they do not confine their response to threatening punishment. They investigate and seek to do something about underlying causes of the problem behavior, and use a variety of approaches designed to improve the student's attitude toward school work: identifying and capitalizing on interests, pointing out logical consequences, developing and using personal relationships, providing remedial instruction where necessary.

When completed, this project will yield information on general strategies that teachers can use for dealing with each of these 12 types of problem students, as well as guidelines for specific responses to the 24 typical problem situations depicted in the vignettes. Because these strategies are being reported by teachers, based on their experiences in typical classrooms, they should be more useful to other teachers than the strategies suggested by psychotherapists and other mental health professionals. The data should also indicate which suggestions from sources like Dreikurs, Glasser, Gordon, and various behavior modifiers seem to be used most frequently and effectively in classrooms, and which are less successful.

A great deal of useful information about classroom management has accumulated in the last 15 years, and it is both more research-based and more internally consistent than before. For the first time, a knowledge base sufficient to support systematic instruction in classroom management is available. This brief article has touched upon only a few highlights. For more information, see Emmer and Evertson (1981) and Brophy and Putnam (1979). ★

# RESEARCH

# THE EFFECTIVE PRINCIPAL

## Researchers are compiling detailed data on the principal's role in good schools but no recipe for success

By Judith Warren Little

In the wake of rapidly accumulating evidence about the nature of effective instruction and effective schools[1] has come the inevitable curiosity about how such schools are created. How are demonstrably effective practices initiated, strengthened, and sustained over time? How do faculties come to share a belief that children can learn, even under difficult circumstances, and to adopt perspectives and habits adequate to the continuous improvement of instruction?

A search for answers to these questions leads one a merry chase through literature on organizational change, the implementation of innovations, staff development, and administrative leadership.[2] That chase reveals one theme that school improvement literature has in common with studies of effective schools: Both highlight the role of the building principal in influencing the instructional choices of teachers. In judging the relative success or failure of school ventures, teachers and others are likely to attribute the outcome in large part to the stance assumed by the principal. Much of the current research and numerous training efforts derive from a persistent belief in the ability of the principal to make a difference to students' academic performance and life prospects, group relationships and cross-group equity, teachers' classroom practices and satisfaction, community support, and other valued aims.

On the whole, the strength of this prevailing belief has far outstripped the strength of the evidence invoked to support it. The glimpses of principals at work—and specifically, principals at work to influence the quality and consequences of instruction—have been at the same time painfully rare and powerfully compelling. Strong images (principals as "keys," "gatekeepers," "catalysts" and the like) are only now being matched by the sort of detailed description that will lend guidance to subsequent research and to programs of training and support. Putting the contrast more bluntly, Michael Fullan[3] observes that "twenty years of meaningless generalities" are now being supported—and sometimes challenged—by detailed research. The state of that research does not yet permit a report of consistent, coherent, and systematic findings on the principal's role in school effectiveness; it does, however, permit us to note insights that have emerged from recent work and to credit work in progress.

### Recent Gains in Research

In some research recently reported, and in other work only now underway, gains of three sorts have been registered. First, there have been substantial advances in understanding the school as a workplace

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Ms. Little is program associate with th r for Action Research, Boulder, Colorado unraveling the multiple role relationships in which principals participate, and the diverse, sometimes competing, demands and expectations to which they must attend. For example, principals who make an effort to improve teacher or school effectiveness may have to juggle simultaneously teachers' demands for autonomy, central office commitment to specific programs, and parental pressure for rapid and visible gains in basic skills. By offering a closer look at the complex work life of principals, recent studies have painted a more realistic picture of the opportunities they encounter and the constraints they face as they grapple with issues of effectiveness.

Second, these studies have been designed to bring conceptual clarity and empirical depth, richness, and specificity to questions that have rested for many years at a broad level of abstraction. Like the research on classroom instruction, research on the role of the principal has increasingly been attentive to daily interactions (the dynamic processes of leadership), and has been supported by methods sufficient to capture those interactions through careful description of practice. In one recently completed study,[4] members of a research team kept detailed logs of the daily activities of 16 principals as they "shadowed" those principals interacting with teachers, students, other building administrators, representatives of the district, parents, and others. Typically, these daily logs chronicled from 50 to 200 separate events.

And finally, some of this research has been explicitly designed to establish the link between principals' views or actions and school effectiveness. Educators looking for guidance from recent research and work now in progress will have to distinguish those works aimed at producing a full description of the principal's role as it is practiced under a range of circumstances from those studies aimed at exploring the influence of the principal only on school effectiveness or school improvement.[5]

## Insights, Clues, and Curiosities

While they do not yet parallel in rigor, breadth, or consistency the effective instruction research or some of the effective schools research, studies of the principalship have generated an array of insights, clues, and curiosities worth pursuing and have prompted vigorous debate about the nature and possibilities of that role.

**Status and initiative.** By virtue of position, the building principal has certain rights of initiative that make it possible to stimulate, sustain, or alter expectations for performance in ways that others in the building cannot. A recurrent observation in studies of effective schools and in studies of effective innovation or change is that principals associated with effective schools or projects actively exploit the resources of their position; they seize the initiative. Blumberg and Greenfield[6] acknowledge wide variation in the daily interactions observed among their eight effective principals, but claim that those principals have in common a propensity to act with proactive intent and with a vision of educational excellence, strongly held and vigorously pursued. Wellisch, et al.,[7] report that achievement gains in math and reading were accomplished in schools where principals aggressively "promoted a point of view." Little[8] reports parallel observations, noting that gains in achievement scores and student self-discipline, together with teachers' perceptions of school and principal effectiveness, were most pronounced where the principal took initiative to promote and participate in specific programs of instructional improvement. Others, however, anticipate that effective leadership might be exercised without such direct and aggressive intervention, particularly by skillful "buffering" of teachers' (autonomous) classroom practices.[9] Principals, they argue, can help sustain overall school effectiveness by limiting unnecessary intrusions into the classroom, by providing adequate materials, by insuring support for special projects, and by helping to preserve order and discipline. In this vein, Van Cleve Morris[10] and his associates describe how principals use their opportunities for "discretionary decisionmaking" to maintain stability and order and to limit intrusions, disruptions, and uncertainties. Toward those ends, they make themselves visible and present in corridors, classrooms, washrooms, stairwells, and throughout the building; they use their knowledge of teacher and community views to decide how aggressively to push district initiatives; they spread good news of school accomplishments in order to capture additional money, staff, and services; they seek ways to limit the paperwork burden on teachers; and they learn and practice maneuvers that give them shortcuts through cumbersome bureaucratic procedures.

**Knowledge and skill in instruction.** Here, the main issue is whether it is possible to judge, reward, strengthen, assist, or sustain teacher effectiveness without knowing in detail what it is and how it is achieved. Principals' general endorsements of innovations and general encouragements to improve practice may prove less influential in altering teachers' practices than specific demonstrations of knowledge about instruction and their specific assistance or advice on matters of classroom practice. In one study,[11] implementation of a set of lesson planning and classroom instruction practices (a variation on "mastery learning") was found to be more rigorous and widespread among faculty where the principal read and discussed the underlying research, participated in the training, and matched classroom observation criteria and schedules to the program standards and schedules. Where principals were less visibly knowledgeable about the specific practices and their rationale and less active in using that knowledge to support their use in the classroom, implementation was uneven and generally shortlived.

**Workplace norms: expectations for effectiveness and improvement.** With the recurrent discovery that the role of the principal is central and consequential comes the equally recurrent and important discovery of the power of the school as a workplace—a social organization. Without denying differences in individuals' skills, commitment, initiative, and persistence, the prevailing pattern of expectations in a building appears to affect the likelihood that effective practices will be used, that they will be used on a large enough scale to be reflected in achievement and other outcomes, and that teachers and others will work continuously to judge and improve their own performance.

Included among the features that distinguish effective schools from their less effective counterparts are these: Teachers and principals in effective schools are more likely to share high expectations for student performance, more likely to believe their teaching will lead to student learning, and more likely to award time to shared work on the preparation and improvement of instruction.[12] Similarly, in a study of the role of staff development in school success, a combination of two workplace norms—a norm of collegial or shared work combined with a norm of continuous improvement—distinguished successful from unsuccessful schools.[13] In the successful schools, teachers and administrators were more likely to talk together regularly and frequently about the business of instruction (as distinct from trading war stories about students, families, or the district), more likely to work together to develop lessons, assignments, and materials, and more likely to teach one another about new ideas or practices: this habit of shared work on teaching (a norm of collegiality) stands in contrast to the carefully preserved autonomy that prevailed in the less successful schools.

## The Open Style

In addition, teachers and administrators in the more successful schools were more likely to view teaching practices (or school practices generally) as open for scrutiny, discussion, analysis, and refinement. In adopting this view, teachers and principals abandoned the view that good teaching is "just a matter of style," and cultivated a habit of continuous evaluation and refinement. They used portions of faculty meetings and lunch hours to talk about (and argue over) research findings and proposed program ideas; observed and were observed regularly; they committed themselves in groups or teams of teachers and principal to a serious classroom test of ideas and methods that appeared promising. Further, building principals were credited with exerting powerful influence on these habits through four distinct classes of behavior:

- First, they contributed to effectiveness-supporting norms by announcing clear expectations for all staff to be knowledgeable about effective instruction and to be participants, independently and with colleagues, in efforts to improve the quality of instruction.
- Second, they contributed to those norms by themselves "modeling" participation in instructional improvement; they organized meeting agendas to reflect a commitment to effectiveness; they read and reported on some of the recent research; they joined teachers in studying, talking about, and planning for instructional improvements; they invited evaluation of their own performance.
- Third, they sanctioned teachers' efforts, concentrating on a variety of rewards for teachers who consistently practiced quality instruction and who routinely subjected their teaching to scrutiny and refinement. Principals rewarded teachers by insuring that broad encouragement was matched by time, materials, and assistance. They juggled schedules to permit teachers to work together. They arranged access to and credit for outside assistance. They sometimes covered classes so that teachers could observe one another, plan together, or participate in training. Further, they offered frequent, informal "pats on the back," celebrated teachers' accomplishments to others ("fame," in the words of one teacher) and learned enough about what teachers were attempting in the classroom to serve as fair, knowledgeable evaluators.
- Finally, principals protected teachers who participated in improvement from a variety of strains and pressures, internal and external. They made it safe for teachers to work toward more effective teaching by stating their belief that "change does not happen overnight," and by organizing a schedule of training and observation that matched that view; teachers were protected by the opportunity to make progressive, sometimes slow, gains in understanding, skill, and confidence. Similarly, principals defended innovating teachers against other, competing, demands on their time and energy by involving them in only one major project at a time. They attempted to reduce resistance, strain, and polarization among teachers or parents by clearly explaining what teachers were attempting, and why, and by giving periodic reports of progress.

The four classes of behavior summarized above constitute only one of several organizing frameworks that have evolved as researchers have struggled to "see" the behavior of principals, to record it, and to make sense of it. Other researchers have proposed a variety of alternative frameworks, often by classifying entire patterns of behavior into one of several styles of administrative management or leadership. Recently, that effort has been specifically directed at the relationship between particular leadership patterns and school effectiveness or school improvement outcomes. In one example, a research project based at the University of Texas has drawn upon a wealth of descriptive data—primarily from elementary schools—to propose three patterns, or styles, of behavior by which principals facilitate change. Hall, Rutherford, and Griffin[14] describe "initiators" as principals who intend specific changes, arrange opportunities to initiate them, and take an active role in leading them. The "manager" and "responder" profiles they describe place less emphasis on principal-sponsored vision and initiative and greater emphasis on actions that build or permit initiative among faculty. In analysis now underway, the central issue is whether these three patterns of influence are associated with differences in the successful and persistent use of particular classroom innovations. It seems reasonable to speculate, in light of other related work, that principals' acts of initiating, managing, and responding (and one might add discouraging or resisting) constitute variable modes of influence rather than fixed styles of leadership, and that the effective use of those behaviors requires judgment.

In any event, the available classifications and heuristic devices are numerous, spawned by an increasingly rich body of descriptive data. The challenge in formulating these classifications and heuristics has been to establish recognizable and patterned differences in behavior among principals; the further challenge, relevant here, will be to establish the recognizable and patterned relationships between those behaviors and school effectiveness outcomes.

## What We Can Expect to Learn

Findings generated over the past five years form a promising point of departure for future research and practice. The limitations and weaknesses of the research are several and have been cataloged elsewhere.[15] By acknowledging and seeking to remedy those limitations, and by building on past contributions, work now in progress can be expected to advance knowledge and practice in several ways.

First, current research will continue to add specificity and richness to the available descriptions of day-to-day performance by principals. Summarizing their review of curriculum innovation, Michael Fullan and Alan Pomfret in 1977 acknowledged that most conclusions about the role of the principal were problematic, relying heavily on "global measures of leadership" and leaving persons uncertain of "the specific nature of [the principal's] role during implementation."[16] Four years later, Fullan was able to review several studies that delivered an impressive degree of specificity.[17] Relying to a much greater extent on direct observation, in-depth interviews, and principals' self-reports, current research has begun to replace broadly sketched impressions of leadership "style" with more closely defined dimensions of situation, practice, and meaning.

In the University of Texas study described above, observations and principals' self-reports in nine schools have yielded descriptive data on more than 2,000 separate interactions involving the building principals.[18] Each interaction has been coded to capture its location, the number and the role of any participants, the medium of communication, and the apparent function (e.g., monitoring and evaluating, consulting, establishing supportive organizational arrangements). Codes have been supplemented by narrative descriptions.

In another recently completed study, Van Cleve Morris and his colleagues at the University of Chicago have drawn upon an extensive pool of descriptive data to reveal the nature and extent of principals' opportunities (and obligations) for discretionary decisionmaking.[19] Extensive daily logs provide the basis for charting where principals spend their time (e.g., 9 percent in classrooms) and with whom they interact (e.g., 18 percent with teachers, and more than 60 percent with persons other than teachers and students). Those same logs are the source for numerous examples marshaled to support a range of interpretive judgments about the purposes served by discretionary decisionmaking; these purposes include among others "upgrading staff quality while preventing staff conflict" and "fostering parent and community involvement while maintaining control over outside influences."

Other studies only now underway promise comparable gains. Researchers at the Far West Laboratory, under the leadership of Steven Bossert, are using a combination of interviews and direct observation ("shadowing") to generate detailed descriptions of the instructional management behavior of principals in elementary and secondary schools.[20] Dan Lortie describes his current work as an "anatomy" of the principalship under a range of school and district conditions; his study promises much needed depth and specificity, though it will not establish (and is not intended to establish) the relationship between specific classes of principal behavior and school effectiveness outcomes.[21]

Second, knowledge and practice will be strengthened by systematic efforts to expand study to secondary schools and to employ conceptual and methodological designs capable of distinguishing the similarities and differences in principals' role repertoires in elementary and secondary schools. Measures of perceived principal effectiveness employed in the Rand study,[22] for example, centered on the degree to which principals served as a direct source of ideas and advice to teachers. Such measures may have given the advantage to elementary school principals, who can reasonably be expected to be knowledgeable about both the substance of the curriculum and the most effective approaches to instruction; they may have limited researchers' ability to learn how secondary school principals exert influence on quality instruction, with a curriculum that is more complex and diverse and in a situation where direct responsibility for upgrading curriculum and supervising classroom performance may lie with others.

Third, research and training programs will both gain from the closer examination of underlying theoretical perspectives or rationales evident in recent work. In the effort to generate credible and rich descriptions of what principals do, such theoretical formulations have often been bypassed or judged to be premature.

## Focusing on the Critical

By positing a set of theoretical relationships, researchers increasingly provide an explicit rationale for concentrating on selected aspects of the principal's role in relation to school effectiveness. In so doing, they add order and coherence to the collection and analysis of large bodies of descriptive data, and establish a way to trace the connection between present research and previous work. The place of "instructional management behavior" as a central variable in their total scheme, for example, has led Bossert and his colleagues to extend their observations ("shadowing") and interviews beyond the principal to include assistant principals and others, like department heads, with formal responsibility for instructional management. Similarly, Lortie will organize his forthcoming report to reveal the way his study continues a tradition in the sociology of work, and the way in which his findings contribute to the study of workplace role relationships.

This theoretical specificity provides a needed balance for a rapidly expanding empirical specificity and richness, lending coherence to an entire line of research on administrative leadership, and increasing the chances that apparently contradictory findings might be reconciled (or the sources of their contradiction understood). Earlier in this discussion, for example, there are two potentially competing views of the nature and extent of the principal's influence on school effectiveness. By one view, effectiveness is more readily assured when a principal is substantively knowledgeable about curriculum and effective instruction, puts forth particular points of view and sponsors particular program initiatives, and participates directly in the work of school improvement. By a second view, effectiveness can be built and sustained by a principal who manages skillfully the technical and physical resources of teaching, preserves teachers' autonomy, and offers wide latitude for teacher initiative. Each of these views has some support in the literature, and each remains to be more fully tested. The ways in which those views complement or compete with one another are more likely to become evident, and their relative power to explain effectiveness outcomes are more likely to be revealed, where the underlying concepts and relationships are clearly, specifically, and systematically stated. As a practical matter, explicitly stated role concepts backed by concrete description may permit practicing principals to analyze situations, project alternative courses of action, establish the relevance and utility of advice, and judge relative progress.

## Standards for Studies

Finally, the probable practical consequences of this line of research call for serious attention to the methods used to study effective principals or principals of effective schools. In one of two papers prefacing the Far West study of principals' instructional management behavior, Bryan Rowan and others argue for three methodological standards that, taken together, can lend rigor and coherence to research on the principalship and can offer a set of guidelines to local educators who must judge the worth and utility of that research. As proposed by Rowan, Dwyer and Bossert,[23] these standards are:

- *Standard 1:* Descriptions of principals' leadership behavior should refer to concrete, school-based activities principals actually engage in.
- *Standard 2:* Measures of school effectiveness should be valid and reliable and reflect the diversity of goals under which schools operate.
- *Standard 3:* Research connecting leadership with effectiveness should be both longitudinal (to disentangle issues of causal ordering) and comparative (to uncover potential interactions between context and leadership).[24]

In sum, the accumulation of findings on effective schools has raised the stakes for the principalship; what has been a set of broad claims, largely unsupported by research and largely untranslated into action, is now becoming a set of demands for competent and vigorous leadership, backed by research and organized into programs of training and support. The research of the past five years has yielded some confirmations of prior beliefs, together with some surprises. Work now in progress promises further advances in knowledge and in practice. ▪

## NOTES

[1] For summaries of some of this work, see: Michael Cohen, "Effective Schools: What the Research Says," *Today's Education* 70, no. 2, pp. 46–49, 1980; Ronald Edmonds, "Some Schools Work and More Can," *Social Policy* (March/April 1979); and Thomas Good, *Classroom Research: What We Know and What We Need to Know* (Austin: University of Texas, Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, 1982).

[2] For recent reviews done from the standpoint of the principal's role, see: Steven T. Bossert, David C. Dwyer, Brian Rowan and Ginny V. Lee, "Towards a School-Level Conceptualization of Instructional Management: The Principal's Role," *Educational Administration Quarterly*, Summer 1982 (forthcoming); Michael Fullan, "School District and School Personnel in Knowledge Utilization," in *Improving Schools: Using What We Know*, edited by Rolf Lehming and Michael Kane (Beverly Hills: SAGE Publications, 1981), pp. 212–252; A. Lorri Manasse, "Effective Principals: Effective at What?", *Principal* (March 1982), pp. 10–15; and Ursula C. Pinero, "Wanted: Strong Instructional Leaders," *Principal* (March 1982), pp. 16–19.

[3] Fullan, op.cit., p. 228.

[4] Van Cleve Morris, Robert L. Crowson, Emanuel Hurwitz, Jr., and Cynthia Porter-Gehrie, *The Urban Principal: Discretionary Decision-Making in a Large Educational Organization* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1981).

[5] Examples of the former include Van Cleve Morris, et al., op cit.; and a report forthcoming by Dan Lortie which he describes as an "anatomy" of the principalship. Examples of the latter include work now in progress at the Far West Laboratory (see Bossert et al., op. cit.) and at the University of Texas (see notes 14 and 18).

[6] A. Blumberg and W. Greenfield, *The Effective Principal* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1980).

[7] W. Wellisch, A. MacQueen, R. Carriere, and G. Duck, "School Management and Organization in Successful Schools," *Sociology of Education*, Vol. 51, pp. 211–226, 1978.

[8] Judith Warren Little, *School Success and Staff Development*, Final Report, NIE contract no. 400-79-0049 (Boulder, Colorado: Center for Action Research, Inc., 1981).

[9] See, for example, Bossert et al., op. cit.

[10] Morris et al., op. cit.

[11] Little, op. cit. See also Fullan, op. cit., for parallel examples.

[12] See note 1.

[13] Little, op. cit.

[14] Gene Hall, William Rutherford and Teresa Griffin, *Three Change Facilitator Styles: Some Indicators and a Proposed Framework* (Austin: University of Texas, Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, 1982).

[15] Brian Rowan, David C. Dwyer and Steven T. Bossert, *Methodological Considerations in Studies of Effective Principals*, paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, March 1982.

[16] Michael Fullan and Alan Pomfret, "Research on Curriculum and Instruction Implementation," *Review of Educational Research* Vol. 47, no. 1, p. 384, 1978.

[17] Fullan, op. cit.

[18] Shirley M. Hord and Marcia L. Goldstein, *What Do Principals Do to Facilitate Change: Their Interventions* (Austin: University of Texas, Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, 1982).

[19] Morris et al., op. cit.

[20] Bossert et al., op. cit.

[21] Personal communication.

[22] Paul Berman and Milbrey Wallin McLaughlin, *Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change*, Vol. 7: *Implementing and Sustaining Innovations* (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1978).

[23] Rowan, Dwyer and Bossert, op. cit., p. 2.

[24] See also Edmonds, who argues for the use of disaggregated data in the selection of effective schools in order to preserve, among criteria for effectiveness, a standard of equity of outcome. (Ronald Edmonds, *What Do We Know about Teaching and Learning in Urban Schools?*, Vol. 6: *A Discussion of the Literature and Issues Related to Effective Schooling*, St. Louis: CEMREL, Inc., 1978.)

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# RESEARCH

# Guidelines for Improving Teacher Quality

### Research studies can guide administrators to strategies that assure successful staff development programs

By Gary A. Griffin

ike members of most professional groups, educators individually and collectively need opportunities to grow and change as their field of practice grows and changes. These opportunities are generally called staff development programs.

"Staff development" has become an umbrella term encompassing widely-varied and often sharply different activities, each of which is designed to increase the professional power of the participants. The different activities may involve functions of governance, content, and/or purpose. Governance of staff development can be in the hands of a school system central office, a teacher association or union, a university graduate school, a regional education agency, or a combination of any or all of these agencies. The content of staff development ranges from opportunities for so-called "personal growth" through system-mandated workshops dealing with specific curricula or pedagogical approaches, to college or university courses designed primarily to satisfy advanced degree requirements. Purposes of staff development programs may be institutional (e.g., altering the "ethos" or climate of a school or set of schools), societal (e.g., providing school-based responses to cultural issues such as integration or mainstreaming), or instructional (e.g., increasing the "time on task" of students during reading and mathematics instruction).[1]

Among the problems in staff development enterprise are: the lack of a generalized receptivity by school staff to such opportunities, the assumed need to work differently with students who vary in personal and demographic characteristics, the limited resources available to support staff development programs, and so on. Staff development programs mirror in complexity the demands and dilemmas of school programs in general.

This complexity, I believe, has contributed to the relative lack of systematic research activity aimed at better understanding of and acting upon staff development activities. There have been very few studies of staff development which can meet conventional research standards of conceptual rigor and methodological precision. (Admittedly, the research technologies in conventional use until the past decade were insufficient to the task of comprehensive understanding of complex social systems.) It is only in recent times that a match has been accomplished between the task (generating knowledge about staff development) and the means to accomplish the task (research methodologies).[2]

In spite of the conditions described above, and perhaps because of them, it is possible to use research findings to suggest effective ways to provide staff development. In addition to recent studies focused specifically on staff development processes and outcomes, other inquiries with school related emphases can be used to infer strategies for planning growth opportunities for school staff. The research bases for this paper include studies of organization development, school change, the adoption of innovations, and effective teaching. By taking an eclectic approach, one can formulate an initial conceptualization of staff development as a school

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activity and apply findings from these inquiries to questions about staff development.

The remainder of this paper proposes strategies for planning staff development programs that should be helpful in promoting positive change on the part of teachers and other school persons.[3]

1. *Staff development programs should be participatory and designed as a consequence of systematic problem identification by those persons most directly related to the problems.* Conventional wisdom has always suggested that the involvement of participants in the process of planning what they will attend to (and how) will result in a greater sense of "ownership" than if activities are thrust upon them. Three research efforts strongly support this view. The Interactive Research and Development on Teaching (IR&DT)[4] study was originally conceptualized as an alternate means to go about doing research on teaching. It became clear early in the process, however, that IR&DT was also a powerful staff development strategy in that it caused teachers to work with researchers and teacher educators on problems of concern to them. As teachers focused their thinking in disciplined (as opposed to conventional wisdom) ways, they gained greater control of their teaching and their other school-based responsibilities. In short, by *doing* research and development they became more sensitive to both the demands and the rewards of their professional activities. In addition, they developed a strong sense of identity with the process and an equally strong commitment to bringing about desired changes in schools and classrooms.

Second, the teacher center movement in the United States has implicitly acted upon the assumption of participatory planning (and governance) in the formulation of activities designed for professional growth. Devaney and Thorn[5] report that collaboration, the involvement of teachers in planning their own development activities, and attention to the nature of school change are apparently related to several outcomes. Among these are: broadened expectations by and for participants, positive relationships with other educators, increased attention to local problem solving, time-use flexibility, and a greater presence of teachers as educational leaders. It is informally hypothesized by many, including this writer, that these outcomes are dependent largely upon the participatory role of teachers in planning and implementing teacher center programs.

In a recent study focused upon school success and staff development, Little[6] concludes that involving teachers in school change efforts and staff development planning is a significant variable related to school effectiveness. That study considers the interaction of staff development, teacher behavior and beliefs, and the characteristics of the school as a workplace. Little and her colleagues examined in detail the behavior of school staff on a daily basis. Their observations of persistent practice in a set of schools (characterized as effective or ineffective) strongly suggested that early and ongoing involvement of all "parties to the action," including teachers, was related to effective schooling.

These studies and others provide support to the proposition that early involvement of the receivers of staff development in the planning of programs will lead to desired program goals.

2. *Staff development programs should, within reasonable limits, be situation-specific.* Schools were long believed to be more similar than different. That is, the mission of providing instruction to captive young people was believed to be the same for all schools; the necessity of furnishing adults to deliver that instruction was a commonplace of schooling; certain subject areas (e.g., reading, mathematics, writing) were present in all school settings, and so forth. The argument, more often implicit than explicit, was that because schools were so similar, programs to improve or maintain their activities could also be similar. The consequence of this reasoning was that it was difficult to detect differences in staff development programs from school system to school system. In fact, several decades ago it was very common for so-called "dog and pony shows" illustrating exemplary programs of curriculum or pedagogy to move from system to system with little if any variation in terms of either content or delivery.

Research on school and teacher effectiveness[7] demonstrated the fallacy of this logic when findings illustrated the differences not only between schools and school systems but *within* those settings. Staff developers and researchers came to believe that education improvement strategies should reflect and act upon these differences. The consequence was that staff development programs began to be planned with specific populations (e.g., teachers) in mind. It was no longer satisfactory to work, for instance, toward a goal of more frequent "higher order" questions in classrooms. It became necessary to determine not just that greater cognitive demands were placed upon students but that there was a match between those demands, the particular students receiving instruction, the nature of the curriculum under consideration, and the skills, knowledge, and beliefs of teachers who would be asking the questions. The staff development activities, then, became more diverse and "situation specific."

3. *Staff development programs should be flexible and responsive to the changes in participants and the changes in the setting.* Many people concerned with schooling issues have decried the apparent lack of receptivity with which innovative programs are met in schools. The most obvious example of this phenomenon is in literature describing what has come to be known as the curriculum reform movement of the 1960s. The argument often presented was that schools and the people in them were so intractable that the good ideas of the times (e.g., the "new math," innovative science programs, team teaching, etc.) were simply locked outside the schoolhouse doors. This depressing conclusion was reinforced when an observ-

er, looking for team teaching, for instance, was able to see only the barest outlines of the strategy in place. Time and again it was decided that an innovation had "failed" because it didn't spring forth in the full glory imagined (and often written about) by its creator.

Of course, what was influencing these conclusions was the erroneous mindset suggested by the discussion of the second strategy presented above: a school is a school is a school. If schools are relatively stable institutions, imagined to be the same or very similar, peopled by workers who could be classified together and thought about as though they were all cut from the same template, and not marked by their own organizational histories, then it was reasonable to assume that new programs could be introduced broadly and they would succeed or fail on their own merits rather than because of the setting in which they were placed. The surprise for many of us was that we were forced to conclude that most, if not all, of the attempts at school innovation "failed."

Greater sensitivity to the reciprocity of school system demands and reform demands enabled us to soften that judgment of failure. A primary stimulus for this change in attitude was the body of research findings demonstrating the apparent relationship between the school as an organization and the way organizational variables influenced both maintenance and innovation activities. Probably the most influential research was what has come to be known as "the Rand study."[8] The inquiry was designed to develop understanding of the consequences of Federal programs aimed at promoting educational innovation with particular attention given to implementation, that sequence of activities which puts ideas into practice.

One of the findings of the Rand study was that implementation periods in school settings are characterized by *mutual adaptation*. This concept suggests that not only is the school or system changed by an innovation but, importantly, that the innovation is changed by the school or system, a natural and largely inevitable phenomenon. Although this is certainly a commonsense idea, the canons of educational innovation until recently assumed that the change was unidirectional, that is, the system changed but the innovation remained the same. Armed with this understanding of reciprocal change, we are now able to examine a school organization with some initial hunches about a proposed change's potential for success and, given the results of our diagnosis, decide to move ahead with the change or work on the organizational variables prior to engaging in the change. In either case, we are forewarned that changes will occur, that some of them will be consonant with the intent of the innovation and some will not, that the people in the process will influence the effort, that organizational variables will interact with the innovation, and that we can plan staff development activities aimed at the organization with the expectation that they will ultimately affect the innovation. In that a large percentage of staff development activities are tied to proposed school innovations, this increased sensitivity for the need for flexibility and for the characteristics of an organization is valuable.

4. *Staff development programs should to some degree mitigate status differences between teachers and administrators.* School staff are constantly exhorted to be cooperative, collegial, and team-spirited when the organization within which these worthy goals are to be achieved is status-laden, hierarchical, and fashioned after the production model. The authority structure is pyramidal but the responsibility structure is relatively "flat." Superintendents can tell principals what to do and principals can tell teachers what to do but, in the end, it is what the teachers do with students that gives the hallmark of success (or lack thereof) to the entire system. Staff development programs for teachers typically follow this same pattern. That is, the programs are planned by administrators and the teachers are expected to participate and to grow professionally. Further, they are expected to participate as a role group (i.e., teachers only) with little if any interaction with administrators.

The consequences of this situation are that teachers are often resentful that they are not a part of the planning and implementation processes related to staff development and, more important to this discussion, that their subsequent practices are then monitored by administrators who may have had minimal or no involvement in the program. Research illustrates how this undesirable situation can be ameliorated.

In the study by Little it was found that principal-teacher teaming was related to school success. This makes conceptual sense, but is seen all too seldom in practice. There are obvious potential benefits to the idea in that the administrator who participates *with* teachers in staff development activities will be more sharply aware of the goals to be accomplished, the strategies to be used, the problems to be faced, the risks to be overcome, the support and resources necessary for implementation, and so forth. This increased sensitivity on the part of the administrator is a critical variable in building both collegiality and receptivity to change as well as to clearing the air of unnecessary static.

The Rand study confirmed this conclusion in its finding that teacher-administrator interaction in staff development activities was characteristic of successful implementation programs.

5. *Staff development programs should depend less upon outsiders and more upon insiders for substantive and procedural guidance.* An apocryphal story is told of an educational consultant who, in reply to a request for assistance from a school superintendent, said, "I have a $500 speech, a $250 speech, and a $100 speech. You want me to speak for nothing. Remember, you get what you pay for." Although the heyday of educational consultants is long past, one suspects that the reason is less because of a conscious decision to use the inhouse resources to solve problems than because

discretionary funds available for paying an outsider to offer advice are simply no longer available in any appreciable quantity. This change in fiscal resources, however, holds promise for increased problem-solving ability by school staff. (Please note that this discussion is not meant to suggest that outside assistance is *never* necessary or desirable, only that the traditional dependence upon it is not always efficient or in the best interests of the setting.)

A major study conducted by the Research Division of the Institute for the Development of Educational Activities, Inc. (I/D/E/A) examined the processes of change engaged in by 18 elementary and secondary schools over a five-year period.[9] One of the major contributions made by the I/D/E/A study was the conclusion that school change (and staff growth) was facilitated by what the investigators called "the peer group strategy." Simply stated, the peer group strategy assumes that the solutions to a school's problems reside in the school. The task is to discover those solutions. The I/D/E/A research group noted that in schools where meaningful change took place a process of problem solving was also present. This process was named DDAE—dialogue, decision making, action, and evaluation. School groups engaged in focused talk about the issues (as opposed to the ubiquitous gripe sessions that appear only to reinforce frustration); the talk led to decisions hypothesized as being influential upon the issue; the decisions were acted upon (different from putting out the latest fires in the setting); and the actions were systematically monitored and evaluated.

In a limited number of cases, mostly informal and unreported, staff development programs have aimed to develop peer groups, usually based in a single school, and have promoted the DDAE process as central to good staff development. These research-derived strategies show promise for increasing the power of growth and improvement activities. It should be noted that this rational and systematic approach is not characteristic of typical school settings and its introduction into schools is a time- and energy-consuming process. (I recall one member of the I/D/E/A research team commenting on the DDA process—the E had not yet become part of the formulation—and noting that it probably would appear to some school persons to be "doom, despair, and anxiety.")

The I/D/E/A study confirmed the notion that school staff can organize their work so that it can be accomplished with internal resources more effectively than had been thought previously.

6. *Staff development programs should be planned with an understanding of the influence of the context upon the program.* During the past decade the influence of context upon staff development has received increased attention from researchers. Some of this study was planned for, and some resulted from attempts to understand, other staff development issues. The overall conclusion that many other researchers and I have reached is that the influence of context on staff development must not be underestimated.

Barth[10] used the case study method to report on an attempt to change an inner-city school from a traditional instructional and organizational one to an open education setting. Despite the good will and the strong commitment of the change agents (university staff and students), the attempts to alter the structure of the organization and the behavior of the staff members failed. Barth explained the failure, in part, by acknowledging that the university personnel lacked understanding of the degree of influence exerted by the school, its history, the perceptions and expectations of the immediate community, and the conventions of teaching and learning held by staff, students, and parents. Although one could accuse Barth and his colleagues of being naive, the knowledge that the context of the school setting can promote or detract from improvement is still not widespread among researchers and staff developers.

Leadership is an important context issue. Griffin and Lieberman[11] reviewed landmark studies of leadership and organizations in order to derive characteristics which might predict successful innovative activities. The review revealed that certain context-related characteristics could be inferred to be predictors. Among these were the ability to analyze and understand the organizational variables which affect staff development: knowledge of the organization and its parts, as well as the relationships among them, gathering and acting upon information about the history of the organization, the degree to which the organization was receptive to new ideas and practices, and the ability to coordinate these organizational variables so that they supported the change effort.

## Conclusion

The six guidelines presented above are among the many which can be developed as a consequence of examining research efforts over the past 15 years. As I noted earlier in the paper, some of the supportive research was conducted in schooling areas which are obliquely, rather than directly, related to staff development. Although there are researchers whose orientation does not allow for this flexibility in the use of results, many of us have found it both necessary and desirable. And, until there is a larger number of research studies directly focused upon staff development *per se*, we must continue to find potentially powerful guidance from other sources. ■

# NOTES

[1] For an historical perspective on staff development programs in schools, see Kenneth Howey and Joseph Vaughan, "Current Patterns of Staff Development," in Gary A. Griffin, ed., *Staff Development*, 83rd Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, in press).

[2] Gary A. Griffin, *Staff Development*, paper prepared for the NIE National Invitation Conference on Research on Teaching Implications for Practice, Airlie House, Virginia (Washington, D.C.: The National Institute of Education, 1982).

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] W. J. Tikunoff, B. A. Ward, and G. A. Griffin, *Interactive Research and Development on Teaching: Final Report* (San Francisco: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1979).

[5] K. Devaney and L. Thorn, *Exploring Teacher Centers* (San Francisco: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1975).

[6] Judith Warren Little, *School Success and Staff Development: The Role of Staff Development in Urban Desegregated Schools* (Boulder: Center for Action Research, Inc., 1981).

[7] For example, see Michael Cohen, "Effective Schools: Accumulating Research Findings," *American Education*, January-February 1982, pp. 13–16, and Jere E. Brophy, "Classroom Management and Learning," *American Education*, March 1982, pp. 20–23.

[8] P. Berman and M. McLaughlin, *Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change, Vol. IV: The Findings in Review* (Santa Monica, The Rand Corporation, 1975).

[9] M. Bentzen, *Changing Schools: The Magic Feather Principle* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974).

[10] R. Barth, *Open Education and the American School* (New York: Agathon Press, 1972).

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# RESEARCH

# How Teachers' Expectations Affect Results

## New research shows that what teachers expect of their pupils is usually what they get from them

By Thomas L. Good

The influence of teachers' expectations on students' performance is a very popular and active research area because of its potential implications for classroom application.

Interests in the effects of teacher expectations upon student performance began with the publication of *Pygmalion in the Classroom* (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). Rosenthal and Jacobson attempted to manipulate teachers' expectations for student performance and to see if these expectations would be fulfilled. The research took place in a single elementary school in San Francisco. Teachers were told that a test (that was actually a general achievement test) had been developed to identify late intellectual bloomers who could be expected to show unusually large achievement gains during the coming school year. A few children in each classroom were identified to the teachers as late bloomers, yet they actually had been selected randomly, not on the basis of any test. There was no real reason to expect unusual gains from them.

Achievement test data from the end of the school year offered evidence that these children as a group did show better performance than expected (although the effects were confined mostly to the first two grades). Rosenthal and Jacobson explained their results in terms of the self-fulfilling prophecy effects of teacher expectations. They reasoned that the expectations they created about these children somehow caused the teachers to treat them differently, so that they really did do better by the end of the year. Unfortunately, *no classroom observations* were made, so it was not possible to verify the differential behavior hypothesis.

Jere Brophy and I became intrigued with the possible effects of teacher expectations on student behavior and decided that the issue needed classroom observational research. The initial coding system we devised focused on teachers' verbal interactions with students. We knew that teacher expectations could be communicated in many ways, and our focus on verbal behavior was due to three basic factors. First, we felt (and still do) that teachers' verbal statements mediated student learning. Also, any research effort is restricted by time and human resources, and we chose to study one area intensively rather than several areas in a more limited fashion. Finally, our backgrounds probably made instructional interaction and related variables most salient.

### Teacher expectations: a model

Before reviewing the findings from this program of research, we should consider the model that guided the project, not only because the model presents hypotheses about how teachers may influence student behavior and achievement, but also because it

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can be used to determine what topics research has so far examined. The model appears as follows:

1. The teacher expects specific behavior and achievement from particular students.
2. Because of these varied expectations, the teacher behaves differently toward different students.
3. This treatment communicates to the students what behavior and achievement the teacher expects from them and affects their self-concepts, achievement motivation, and levels of aspiration.
4. If this treatment is consistent over time, and if the students do not resist or change it in some way, it will shape their achievement and behavior. High-expectation students will be led to achieve at high levels, whereas the achievement of low-expectation students will decline.
5. With time, students' achievement and behavior will conform more and more closely to the behavior originally expected of them.

The model is broadly conceived, and this general conceptualization has both advantages and disadvantages. However, as more data have been collected and as the diversity of life in classrooms has become more evident (especially the various ways in which high- and low-achievement students are treated), the breadth and general abstractness of the model seem to be well-stated.

The model focuses on the behavior and achievement of individual students (not classes or groups of students) and on overt differences in teacher behaviors. Step 3 in the model suggests the possibility of both direct effects of teacher behavior (that is, pupils will have less work to do) and indirect effects (student motivation). In retrospect, it is now clear that most of the research on teacher expectations has examined direct effects of differential teacher behavior rather than indirect effects (students' perceptions of teacher behavior or their inferences about teacher behavior).

The fourth step of the model suggests that students are important and that some of them will be more affected by classroom process than others. However, our earlier conceptualization emphasized the reactive effects of students on teachers (how they resist teacher influence) rather than how students proactively influence teachers (although our writing did indicate that the formation of teacher expectations—Step 1—was based in part upon student behavior). Little research has focused specifically on how students can alter or control teacher expectations. Similarly, few studies have addressed Step 5: the effects of teacher expectations and behavior upon student achievement.

Despite the number of questions that could be raised about teacher expectation effects, a decade after teacher expectation research began most research has studied Step 2 (Do teachers treat high- and low-achieving students differently?). Also, most studies have only examined differential verbal teacher behavior; other important variables have *not* been studied. Although the coding system developed for our own work emphasized verbal behavior (Brophy & Good, 1970a), the model itself does not exclude other forms of differential behavior, such as grading.

*Research Findings**

Behaviors that sometimes indicate differential teacher treatment of high and low achievers are:

1. Wait less time for lows to answer (Allington, 1980; Bozsik, 1982; Rowe, 1974; Taylor, 1979).
2. Give lows the answer or call on someone else rather than trying to improve their responses by giving clues or repeating or rephrasing a question (Brophy & Good, 1970b; Jeter & Davis, 1973).
3. Inappropriate reinforcement: rewarding lows' inappropriate behavior or incorrect answers (Amato, 1975; Fernandez, Espinosa, & Dornbusch, 1975; Kleinfeld, 1975; Rowe, 1974; Weinstein, 1976; Taylor, 1977).
4. Criticizing lows more often for failure (Brophy & Good, 1970b; Cooper & Baron, 1977; Good, Cooper, & Blakey, 1980; Good, Sikes, & Brophy, 1973; Jones, 1971; Medinnus & Unruh, 1971; Rowe, 1974; Smith & Luginbuhl, 1976).
5. Praising lows less frequently than highs for success (Babad, Inbar, & Rosenthal, in press; Brophy and Good, 1970b; Cooper & Baron, 1977; Firestone & Brody, 1975; Good, Cooper, & Blakey, 1980; Good, Sikes, & Brophy, 1973; Martinek & Johnson, 1979; Meddinus & Unruh, 1971; Rejeski, Darracott, & Hutslar, 1979; Spector, 1973).
6. Failure to give feedback to the public responses of lows (Brophy & Good, 1970b; Good, Sikes, & Brophy, 1973; Jeter & Davis, 1973; Willis, 1970).
7. Generally paying less attention to lows or interacting with them less frequently (Adams & Cohen, 1974; Blakey, 1970; Given, 1974; Kester & Letchworth, 1972; Page, 1971; Rist, 1970; Rubovits & Maehr, 1971).
8. Calling on lows less often to respond to questions (Davis & Levine, 1970; Mendoza, Good & Brophy, 1972; Rubovits & Maehr, 1971).
9. Seating lows farther away from the teacher (Rist, 1970).
10. Demanding less from lows. This differential treatment is evidenced by a variety of behaviors. Beez (1968) found that tutors with high expectations not only tried to teach more words, but taught with more rapid pacing and less extended explanation and repetition of definitions and examples. Evertson, Brophy, and Good (1973) found that when teachers tried to improve students' responses, they were more likely to simply repeat the question to highs but to give help or clues to lows. The studies of inappropriate reinforcement mentioned above indicate that

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*Various writers have compiled lists of teachers' differential behaviors toward students perceived to be high and low achievers (Brophy & Good, 1974; Cooper, 1979; Good & Brophy, 1980). This particular list is adopted from Brophy (in press).

teachers may accept low quality or even incorrect responses from lows.

11. Teachers interact with lows more privately than publicly, and monitor and structure their activities more closely (Brophy & Good, 1974, discuss these differences in detail).

12. Differential administration or grading of tests or assignments, in which highs but not lows are given the benefit of the doubt in borderline cases (Cahen, 1966; Finn, 1972; Heapy & Siess, 1970).

13. Less friendly interaction with lows including less smiling and fewer other non-verbal indicators of support (Babad, Inbar, & Rosenthal, in press; Chaikin, Sigler, & Derlega, 1974; Kester & Letchworth, 1972; Meichenbaum, Bowers, & Ross, 1969; Page, 1971; Smith & Luginbuhl, 1976).

14. Briefer and less informative feedback to lows' questions (Cooper, 1979; Cornbleth, Davis, & Button, 1972).

15. Teachers exhibit less eye contact and nonverbal communication of attention and responsiveness (leaning forward, positive head nodding) in interaction with lows (Chaikin, Sigler, & Derlega, 1974).

16. Less intrusive instruction of lows; that is, less direct instruction and more opportunity for them to do seatwork (Anderson & Rosenthal, 1968; Beez, 1968; Allington, 1980; Brophy et al., 1981).

17. Less use of effective but time-consuming instructional methods with lows when time is limited (Swann & Snyder, 1980).

Brophy (in press) also notes that research on teachers' differential treatment of reading groups suggests potential mediators of expectation effects. Teachers tend to give longer reading assignments (Pflaum et al., 1980), provide more time for discussion of the story (Bozsik, 1982), and are generally more demanding (Haskett, 1968) with high groups than with low groups. They are quicker to interrupt low-group students when they make reading mistakes (Allington, in press), and more likely to simply give them a word or prompt them with graphemic (phonetic) cues rather than semantic or syntactic cues designed to help them intuit a word from its context (Allington, 1980; Pflaum et al., 1980). Teachers are also less likely to ask low groups higher level, comprehension questions (Bozsik, 1982).

The teacher-student interactions listed above were observed in correlational research and hence it is impossible to say with certainty that the behaviors are due to teacher expectations (e.g., differential patterns of interaction may be maintained by student behavior). Also, a single process measure cannot be used as a sign of effective or ineffective communication or teaching. The value of any teaching behavior depends on the teacher's total instructional system (for instance, the assignment of homework is neither good nor bad; if teachers fail to prepare students for homework or if teachers fail to check homework, it is an ineffective practice).

The teacher behaviors presented above do not necessarily characterize ineffective teaching; rather, they should be used as guidelines by supervisors and teachers for analyzing their behavior and to study effects of teacher behavior on particular students. There is no reason to assume that teachers should treat all students alike; however, some teachers overreact to relatively small differences among students by teaching them in sharply divergent ways or by providing varied assignments. I agree with Allington (in press), who suggests that students believed to be low achievers often fail to learn adequately because they are not treated more like students who are believed to be good students.

It is important to state that *not all* teachers show a consistent pattern of sharply differentiated interaction toward high- and low-potential students. Also, the type of problem behavior varies from class to class; hence, no simple presumptions are possible. One estimate based on several studies that were conducted over a number of years suggested that about one-third of the teachers observed acted in a way that appeared to exaggerate the initial deficiencies of low achievers (Good & Brophy, 1980). That is, the teachers appeared to "cause" the students to decline by providing them with fewer educational opportunities and by teaching them less. These teachers were described as overreacting to the learning deficiencies of lows in ways that reduced both their opportunity and motivation for learning.

A second group of teachers was described as *reactive*. These teachers also allowed high students to dominate the class, but not to the extent that overreactive teachers did. In these classrooms, high students received more opportunities, but only because they raised their hands more or sought out the teacher more frequently. A third group of *proactive* teachers did not allow their expectations for low-achieving students to interfere with their attempts to teach them. These teachers were described as "proactive" because they structured their classrooms so that they could meet the needs of low achievers with increased time and attention, yet they did not ignore the instructional needs of other students. That is, these teachers appeared to anticipate the needs of different students and to plan in such a way that diverse student needs could be satisfied in the classroom. (For more information about individual teacher styles and the expression of differential performance expectations to students, see Cooper, 1979; Brophy, in press).

It is known, then, that some teachers treat students believed to be less capable in ways that differ substantially from the ways they interact with high achievers. Unfortunately, the *effects* of differential teacher behavior on students' behavior, attitudes, perceptions, and achievement have not been studied systematically. However, there is growing evidence that students are aware of differential teacher behavior and that certain practices have negative effects on students' beliefs and achievement (e.g., Weinstein, 1982).

## Passivity model

It is my belief that the interactions low-achieving students have with different teachers are so varied that some students have difficulty knowing what they are expected to do. In particular, some low achievers are exposed to varied teacher behavior that, in time, reduces student initiative both behaviorally (e.g., raise hand, approach teacher) and cognitively (e.g., attempt to think about the meaning of an assignment or a particular subject).

Teachers differ from one another in the way they express expectation effects. Sometimes these style differences are very dramatic. Some teachers criticize low achievers more frequently than highs per incorrect response, and praise lows less than highs per correct answer. In contrast, other teachers praise marginal or incorrect responses given by low achievers. These findings appear to reflect two different types of teachers. Teachers who criticize lows for incorrect responses seem to be basically intolerant of these pupils. Teachers who reward marginal (or even wrong) answers appear to be excessively sympathetic and unnecessarily protective of lows. Both types of teacher behavior illustrate to students that effort and classroom performance are not necessarily related (Good and Brophy, 1980).

Over time, such differences in the way teachers treat low achievers (for example, in the third grade a student is praised or finds teacher acceptance for virtually any verbalization but in the fourth grade the student is seldom praised and is criticized more) may reduce low students' efforts and contribute to a passive learning style. Other teacher behaviors may also contribute to this problem. Low students who are called on frequently one year (the teacher believes that they need to be active if they are to learn), but who find that they are called on infrequently the following year (the teacher doesn't want to embarrass them) may find it confusing to adjust to such different role definitions. Ironically, those students who have the least adaptive capacity may be asked to make the most adjustment as they move from classroom to classroom. The greater variation in how different teachers interact with lows (in contrast to the more similar patterns of behavior that high students receive from different teachers) may exist because teachers agree less about how to respond to students who do *not* learn readily.

It is likely that even within a single year low achievers are asked to adjust to more varied expectations than highs. This may be true in part because low achievers have different teachers. (In addition to the regular teacher, they may have a remedial math, reading, or speech teacher). What are the implications if teachers provide fewer chances for lows to participate in public discussion? If they wait less time for them to respond when they are called on (even though these students may need more time to think and to form an answer)? If they criticize them more per incorrect answer, and praise them less per correct answer than they do for high students? It seems that a good strategy for students who face such conditions would be not to volunteer or not to respond when called on. Students would appear to be discouraged from taking risks and chances under such an instructional system. To the extent that students are motivated to reduce risks and ambiguity—and many argue that students are strongly motivated to do so (Doyle, 1980)—it seems that students would become more passive in order to reduce the risks of noncontingent teacher feedback and assignments. What researchers need to consider now are the circumstances under which major differences in teacher behavior are adaptive, and for which types of students.

Having acknowledged that variability is beneficial for student growth under certain conditions, I want to return to the problem of some students experiencing too much discontinuity in schooling. For example, if problem solving in mathematics is taught one year as "take your time and develop one or two best approaches for solving the problem," and the next year it is taught as "come up with as many hypotheses as you can and then begin to respond to the problem"— what are the effects on students' beliefs about mathematics? (For example, do they conclude that mathematics is an arbitrary set of rules—a system that they can't figure out or don't want to?)

The argument here is not necessarily that teachers within a school should reduce the number of approaches to presenting subject matter or the reward structures associated with work. Discontinuities are useful when needed and appropriate (as many are) but in most cases sharp differences in work expectations that teachers hold need to be explained to students. However, teachers can describe such expectations and work standards to students so that they are more likely to facilitate achievement. For example, I believe that *when* mathematics teachers know their programs differ in style and emphasis, student learning initiative could be greatly facilitated by brief recognition of, and explanations for, such differences at the beginning of the year. ("Last year we approached problem solving this way for several good reasons. This year we are going to look at it in a different way.")

However, discontinuities may occur not only because of differential expectations that various teachers hold for certain types of students (e.g., low achievers) or for individual students, but may also result from incomplete or inconsistent teacher plans. For example, Doyle (1979) advocates the examination of classroom tasks and activity structures because he believes that the two differ within some, and possibly many, classrooms. Doyle contends that what some students do in classrooms (and their perceptions of what they are doing and why) may be discrepant with the actual task that the teacher has in mind. That is, students are practicing the wrong operations. For example, a teacher may spend much class time having students *diagram* sentences; however, the teacher might choose not to test whether students can apply this skill (e.g., students are required to *write* original sentences). From Doyle's perspective, having students practice diagramming sentences would have been an activity and not a task, since it was not functionally related to the intended outcome. Such instructional ambiguities may cause students to become more passive thinkers and more active in their attempts to get teachers to lessen academic demands.

### Teacher expectations: some implications

Research on teacher expectations does not yield simple, universal answers. This is in part the case because observational data suggest that the *problem* varies from class to class. Some teachers assign lows material that is too ambiguous and/or too difficult, but other teachers assign lows content that is too easy (this appears to be the more common problem). Some teachers spend too little time with low achievers, but others find adequate time and appropriate ways to relate to students perceived as low in ability. As I have pointed out elsewhere (Good, in press), rules like "increase the number of times lows are called on" and "praise them more frequently" will do more harm than good because some teachers are already utilizing these techniques appropriately and an increase in these behaviors would be dysfunctional.

The variables affecting teaching and learning are numerous, complex, and interrelated. Knowledge related to the effects of teacher expectation is therefore best imparted to teachers along with judgmental and decisionmaking skills about its appropriate use, rather than presenting teachers with a list of behaviors they need to perform (Good, in press). Simply put, information about behaviors that communicate low teacher expectations must be integrated with information about student development and learning if such knowledge is to be used appropriately.

In addition to gaining improved skills for understanding and communicating effectively with students in real classrooms, teachers need more information about teaching as well as more opportunities to observe (and to be observed by other teachers). Too often teachers work in isolation and are denied the chance to talk with other professionals about the work of teaching.

Inservice settings can be used to provide teachers with more ways for interacting with high- and low-achieving students. In terms of creating an interest in modifying behavior, the opportunity to observe a successful classroom is quite compelling. Once teachers see students responding in a manner that they heretofore felt unlikely, the more likely it is that teachers will attempt to find strategies that work for them in their own classrooms. When teachers see low-achieving students responding in ways which they did not feel were possible, they will be more likely to reevaluate their assumptions about the extent to which students' learning can be influenced and modified by their own instructional behavior. General advice about the use of classroom observation in inservice programs can be found elsewhere (Good & Brophy, 1978).

Information about ways in which teachers sometimes differ in their behavior toward high- and low-achieving students should be a part of all inservice instruction. The extent to which this information is presently contained in such curricula and training is unknown. However, informal contact with teachers suggests that many teachers do not have formal ways for analyzing or monitoring their interactions with different types of students. In short, they do not have a model for considering or explaining why low expectations might be communicated in the classroom. Principals and curriculum specialists can play an important instructional leadership role by helping teachers become aware of expectation issues (Good & Brophy, 1978).

Inservice training in this area could play a valuable role by helping prospective teachers to understand that a degree of failure will be present in any teaching situation (learning occurs in stages and reteaching is often necessary) and that teachers need to develop strategies for responding to student failure. In particular, inservice programs need to create role definitions which specify that the teacher is there primarily to actively teach, and that student failure calls for reteaching rather than rationalization. Many teachers need to develop greater tolerance and skills for dealing with students when success is not immediate.

Instruction that encourages prospective teachers to think about the need to coordinate their beliefs (e.g., reactions to failure) and behavior (criteria for evaluating student work) is also needed. Variation in teacher beliefs and behavior may often have desirable effects on some students, especially when teachers explain their reasons for change (... last year different criteria were used for grading your composition papers; this year emphasis is placed upon X because ...). However, unexplained discrepancies that exist between classrooms would appear to negatively affect some students' motivation (especially low achievers). Preservice and inservice activities should encourage teachers to develop a coordinated curriculum but should not undermine the initiative of individual classroom teachers. Serious and successful instruction involves not only the purposeful teaching of students in a given class, but also building *meaningful* continuity and variety across consecutive grade levels.

Research on school effectiveness (Brookover et al., 1979; Edmonds, 1979; Rutter et al., 1979) indicates that higher expectations for student achievement are part of a pattern of differential attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors characterizing teachers and schools that maximize their students' learning gains. Brookover et al. (1979), for example, found that in effective schools the teachers not only held higher expectations, but acted on them by setting goals expressed as minimally acceptable levels of achievement. To the extent that most teachers in a school communicate consistent and appropriate expectations, the effects would likely be greater than those represented by an individual teacher.

## Need for new research

I believe there are sufficient data available to make teachers aware of various aspects of classroom comunication that often inhibit the performance of certain students, and that application of such knowledge (if done well and with a decision-making focus) could provide more interesting and efficient learning experiences for more students than is presently the case. However, I believe that we have just begun to understand the relationship between expectation and performance. Here I will discuss but a few of the many research questions that may yield important insights for thinking about classroom behavior and perhaps for generating concepts that can be used to improve classrooms.

Perhaps the most serious omission in much of the teacher expectation literature is the need for more information about students' perceptions and judgments of classroom events. (Do students see and assess teacher behaviors and classroom assignments in ways that are consistent with teachers' intentions?) Fortunately, in the past few years many researchers have started to look at the expectations and perceptions of students as well as of teachers (e.g., Weinstein, in press; Rohrkemper, 1981). In time, the integration of work in student expectation with work in teacher expectation should yield a more complete understanding of classroom behavior.

Most research on teacher expectations concerns the verbal behavior of teachers toward high- and low-achieving students. It would be instructive and important to broaden subsequent research efforts to examine teachers' *preferences* and *norms* in addition to their *beliefs* about the capabilities of individual students (Biddle, 1979). Presumably, teachers' preferences (the extent to which they feel attachment or rejection toward individual students) and teachers' norms about how they should interact with low-achieving students may also be influential determinants of classroom behavior.

More studies of the effects of the *composition of students* in individual classrooms need to be done. Certain combinations of students may make it more or less difficult for particular students to interact with individual low achievers and/or to influence how teachers perceive the potential of individual students or the class as a class (Beckerman & Good, 1981; Thelen, 1960). Teachers commonly report that some classes are much more difficult and/or enjoyable to teach than others, yet we have comparatively little information about characteristics of classes that lead teachers to respond in different ways, and about how teachers' expectations for an entire class subsequently influence their classroom behavior or expectations for individual students. More research emphasis needs to be placed upon how different distributions of students influence teacher expectations and behavior.

To date, research on teacher expectations has focused almost entirely on expectations for student achievement. Yet, as Good and Brophy (1978, 1980) have pointed out, the success of teachers' classroom management efforts is probably determined in part by the expectations that teachers communicate about student conduct; classroom atmosphere probably depends in part on the expectations teachers communicate about student cooperation; and student responsiveness to assignments is likely related to the expectations teachers communicate about the meaningfulness or value of those assignments. In short, teachers routinely model and communicate expectations likely to affect not only achievement, but students' attitudes, beliefs, attributions, expectations, achievement motivation, and classroom behavior.

One problem in research on teacher expectation effects has been the infrequent measurement of student progress or outcomes (changes in achievement or attitude over time). What measurement of achievement has taken place has tended to occur at the end of the year and there have been few attempts to relate specific outcomes (what students learn during a particular week) to the detailed observation of a learning experience (that is, observation during the week in which learning is being measured).

More careful attention to immediate classroom outcomes should lead to increased understanding of the relationship between beliefs, behavior, and achievement. In ongoing research at Michigan State University, Linda Anderson and colleagues (Anderson, 1981) have found that many students, especially low achievers, are often left without adequate information for doing assigned seatwork.

In the past, tracking and other forms of ability grouping have received considerable research attention. Unfortunately, during the 1970s, when investigators began to examine classroom *process*, little attention was paid to what takes place during high- and low-group instruction. Although there are some exceptions (e.g., McDermott, 1976; Weinstein, 1976), there have been few studies concerning how teachers' expectations vary toward students who have been placed in different groups. Nor are there many studies concerning the expectations that students hold for their own learning potential as a function of being placed into high and low groups.

There is evidence which indicates that grouping has powerful effects upon student achievement (Webb, 1982; Weinstein, 1976), but little understanding of why these effects take place (Weinstein, 1976). Recently there has been increasing interest in placing students into groups and allowing them to teach one another (e.g., Slavin, 1980). Furthermore, researchers are trying to assess how the composition of students placed into learning groups affects group processes (student interactions) and outcomes (learning of material). Several interesting studies have been conducted but their findings yield no firm conclusions about optimal assignment patterns (e.g., Peterson & Wilkinson, 1982; Webb, 1982). To promote more thoughtful and successful teaching behavior (whether teachers or students act as instructors), we need to understand much more thoroughly the consequences of placing students into groups (in particular how placement affects expectations and performance).

Finally, I might note that most expectation studies examine classrooms or schools. What happens in classrooms and schools is also influenced by expectations that are outside schools. For example, Hall and Spencer Hall (1980) found that in one community the media brought to public attention student performance on a series of basic skills tests. Because there was a diversity of scores, local administration and school board members received pressure from the community reflecting a concern on the part of some parents that their children were not performing up to expected levels as compared with other school systems. As a result, the administration went through a series of negotiations, including reinterpretation of the meaning of these scores, with community members, school board members, and teachers. Such negotiation has led the administration to implement programs within classrooms that instruct students in the skills needing improvement, as shown by the tests. New expectations for the children's performance arose, through the process of negotiation, from the state department of education, the media, the central and school administration, the school board, and finally the classroom teacher. Had the media not intervened in this case, change might have occurred much differently, or not at all, and the public might have had quite different expectations for their children's performance on the tests.

Clearly, the study of expectation effects is a complex and challenging area. Future research is needed and careful work will yield new descriptions and concepts that can be used by teachers to think about and perhaps to improve their instructional behavior. ■

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# RESEARCH

# THE ROLE OF TESTING IN EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

## How can testing improve school effectiveness?

By Andrew C. Porter

Over the past decade, a sometimes heated debate has developed over the positive and negative effects of testing on the quality of American education. On the positive side, tests are held to provide information for teachers that will aid them in making important instructional decisions, and information to students that will enhance their motivation to learn, as well as information to educational administrators and the public that will support necessary evaluations of programs (e.g., Tyler & White, 1979). Some critics claim that testing leads to selection and labeling that is harmful, to biased assessments for minority students, and to inappropriate focusing of the school curriculum on a limited number of cognitive skills (e.g., Cooper & Leiter, 1980). Most of the debate has taken place in the popular press and at conferences. In contrast, the professional literature contains surprisingly few reports of empirical investigations on the role that testing plays in education. Most of the research available has been completed within the last few years (Kelleghan, Madaus, & Airasian, 1982).

### How much testing is done?

Despite the debate, one thing is clear. The amount of testing in United States schools is substantial. Based on a national survey on science, mathematics, and social studies education, Weiss (1978) estimates that 93 percent of the nation's school districts use standardized tests of mathematics in the elementary grades. Apparently, less standardized testing is done with high school students: 67 percent of the school districts surveyed reported using standardized tests of mathematics with high school students. Daniel Resnick (1981) reports that the amount schools spend on standardized tests has been on a steady increase, in constant dollars, since 1970, and by 1976 exceeded $40 million each year.

Standardized tests, of course, represent only one part of the testing done in schools. School districts frequently augment statewide assessment programs with standardized tests and their own minimum competency tests of basic skills. All of these testing programs are required, but teachers also use tests of their own choosing. For example, a national survey of testing practices conducted by the Center for the Study of Evaluation (Burry, Catterall, Choppin, & Dorr-Bremme, 1982) found that the average amount of time devoted to testing in grades four and six was approximately 22 hours per school year. Only 20 to 30 percent of that time, however, was taken up by required testing.

### Is testing important in effective schools?

Within the context of the debate on testing, the effective schools literature must be seen as aligned squarely with the advocates of testing. Nearly all of the summaries of that research (e.g., Austin, 1979; Cohen, 1982; Edmonds, 1979; Rutter, 1979) include some form of testing program as one of five factors

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important to creating an effective school. Since apparently all schools use achievement tests, at least to some extent, it is necessary to look at variations among schools to determine the uniqueness of testing in effective schools. Unfortunately, the research on effective schools shows much more clearly that testing is important than it shows the role that testing plays and the essential features of a testing program to support an effective school.

Taken together, the five features of an effective school suggest a rational approach to education (Porter, 1982) that bears a marked resemblance to a mastery learning model, but at the school level (e.g., Bloom, 1968). The professional staff of a school share a commitment to the attainment of clearly articulated goals for student achievement and hold high expectations for students attaining those goals. The school climate is to be orderly and task-oriented. A principal who provides strong leadership and becomes actively involved in instruction appears to be required. To all of the above is added "a system for monitoring and assessing pupil performance which is tied to instructional objectives" (Cohen, 1982).

Within the context of the other four factors, the role of testing in creating effective schools seems to fit better with an accountability perspective than with a diagnosis and prescription perspective. Tests are one mechanism available for making clear and forceful the goals of education. Although some have criticized tests for focusing and narrowing the school curriculum, moving systematically toward achievement of clear goals in a limited number of areas (currently basic skills) appears to be at the very heart of what defines an effective school.

Of course, delimiting the school's curriculum may come at a price. Recent research on teaching has stressed the importance of student-engaged learning time for student achievement (Denham & Lieberman, 1980). If teachers and students focus on a limited set of achievement goals, then presumably other achievement goals will be ignored. This analysis suggests a slight recasting of the role of testing in effective schools. Those schools which use tests that are consistent with their instructional focus will appear effective while other schools will not. In their review of evaluations comparing innovative and traditional curricula, Walker and Schaffarzick (1974) provide some support for this contention. Evaluations which used outcome measures of student achievement that were tied to the goals of the innovative program were much more likely to find differences favoring the innovation.

The question of what should be the goals of schooling (or for that matter whether schools should have clearly articulated goals) is not likely to be settled through empirical research. If focus has a cost, then ultimately the decision to pursue a focused curriculum must be answered on political and philosophical grounds. What empirical research can provide, however, is a clearer sense of the likely consequences of choosing among alternative approaches to education. Since testing has been both criticized and advocated for bringing focus to a school's curriculum it seems useful to take a closer look at the nature of that focus. Standardized tests of student achievement are the most visible and universally used tests in the United States, and so they seem a good place to start.

## Conflicting advice on what should be taught

A team of researchers at the Institute for Research on Teaching (IRT) at Michigan State University is engaged in a program of research designed to provide information on factors which influence teacher decisions about what to teach. Using fourth-grade mathematics as a context for their work, they have completed content analyses of standardized tests and textbooks to determine the implied student achievement goals of each and the extent to which, across tests and textbooks, these goals are held in common (Freeman, Kuhs, Porter, Floden, Schmidt, & Schwille, in press). Since nearly all teachers use textbooks and standardized tests (particularly in elementary school), the results of these content analyses are helpful in understanding the role that commercially available tests can play in supporting effective schools.

Five standardized tests designated as appropriate for use at the end of fourth grade and four commonly used fourth-grade mathematics tests were analyzed. Each exercise or item in each source of instructional materials was described, using a three-dimensional taxonomy of elementary school mathematics. The three dimensions of the taxonomy describe 1) the general intent of the item/exercise (e.g., conceptual understanding or application), 2) the nature of material presented to students (e.g., fractions or decimals), and 3) the operation the student must perform (e.g., estimate or multiply). Specific mathematics topics are defined through the combination of levels from all three dimensions of the taxonomy (e.g., solving story problems that require the addition of single digit whole numbers). Each textbook and test was independently analyzed by two raters and in all cases interrater reliability was .94 or above.

For those who hold that there exists a well-defined national curriculum in elementary school mathematics, the results were surprising. Across the five tests and four textbooks, 385 mathematics topics were identified. Of those topics, 54 percent were in one or more textbooks but not on any of the tests. Another 7 percent of the topics were on one or more tests but not included in any of the textbooks. Less than 2 percent of the topics (i.e., 6 topics) were included in all tests and all textbooks. There were, however, a few topics (19, or 5 percent, of the 385 topics) on which each of the textbooks placed a great deal of emphasis (50 to 60 percent of the exercises in each textbook).

These results indicate that standardized tests and textbooks are not always in agreement on what students are to achieve. When Freeman et al. (in press) considered particular combinations of standardized tests and textbooks, the possibilities for the two sources of instructional material to reinforce common achievements goals did not dramatically improve. For example, the percent of textbook topics covered by a test ranged from 14 to 29 percent, while the percent of tested topics covered by 20 or more exercises in a book ranged from 21 to 50 percent.

If the professional staff of an effective school are to share clearly articulated goals for student achievement, then presumably these goals should be reinforced in the instructional materials they use. The diversity of content found among textbooks and standardized tests of fourth-grade mathematics suggests that at least those materials provide little support to a school seeking commonly shared goals for student achievement. In fact, the co-existence of these materials may work at cross purposes to the pursuit of common goals. When one considers the presence of state and district tests in addition to standardized tests and tests in textbooks, the likelihood of teachers receiving conflicting messages about what should be taught is substantial.

In a sense, the diversity of expectations as reflected in the content of state, district, standardized and textbook tests restores autonomy to the schools in setting achievement goals. The schools, however, must take an active role in articulating their own goals, or autonomy in setting goals for student achievement will extend to the level of individual teachers. Creating effective strategies for articulating school achievement goals requires knowing how teacher decisions about what to teach are influenced.

### Influencing teachers' content decisions

The same team of IRT researchers that analyzed textbooks and standardized tests for content has done research that sheds light on the extent to which tests and other factors influence teachers' content decisions. One of their studies (Floden, Porter, Schmidt, Freeman, & Schwille, 1981) considered the influence of a district-mandated textbook, district published objectives, standardized tests with results published in the local newspaper by grade level and school, as well as requests from the principal, teachers in higher grades, and parents. The study involved 66 fourth-grade teachers from geographically diverse areas in the state of Michigan.

So that the separate and combined effects of the six pressures could be clearly identified, the study was based on teacher reactions to hypothetical schools. Each school was described by a brief narrative that indicated the presence or absence of each of the six potential influences on teacher content decisions. For example, there were six schools in which only a single potential influence was present and one school in which all six influences were present. In each combination of the six potential influences, teachers were asked to teach five mathematics topics that they had not been teaching and to drop five topics that they usually taught.

The results were quite straightforward. Teachers reported that all six sources of advice would influence their content decisions, though they were much more likely to add new topics than they were to delete topics they had been teaching. The strongest influences were tests and district objectives. Even a single potential influence was seen to affect the likelihood of a teacher adding and deleting topics. As the number of potential influences increased, all of which called for the same content changes, the reported likelihood of adding (and deleting) topics also increased. Any four of the six factors was sufficient to make teachers virtually certain they would add the five topics to their instruction.

The implications of this research for creating effective schools seem clear. Teachers believe that the content of tests is a legitimate authority in deciding what to teach; but so are textbooks, objectives, the principal, other teachers, and parents. If teachers in a school are to share common goals for student achievement, then either these goals must be uniformly endorsed by the instructional materials they use and the advice they receive from others or there must be one source of advice that takes precedence over all others.

### Strong Testing Programs

One way for a school to bring order to the conflicting messages that teachers receive concerning what should be taught may be through a strong testing program. The effective schools research is supportive of this possibility in that student assessment tied to school goals was one of five factors identified with effective schools.

Sociological theory provides some guidance on how a school might construct strong policies for supporting commonly held goals for student achievement (Spady & Mitchell, 1978). The authority of a

**Other "Effective Schools" articles in the series**

This is the last in a series of six articles published in *American Education* about NIE-sponsored research on Effective Schools. The other articles in the series:

| Title | Author | Issue |
|---|---|---|
| Effective Schools: Accumulating Research Findings | Michael Cohen | January–Febuary 1982, pp. 13–16 |
| Classroom Management and ~~Training~~ Learning | Jere E. Brophy | March 1982, pp. 20–22 |
| The Effective Principal | Judith Warren Little | August–September 1982, pp. 38–42 |
| Guidelines for Improving Teacher Quality | Gary Griffin | November 1982, pp. 33–37 |
| How Teachers' Expectations Affect Results | Thomas Good | December 1982, pp. 25–32 |

school policy can be enhanced through appeals to a legal office (e.g., adopted as official school policy), social norms (e.g., a call for content that teachers believe is commonly taught), expertise (e.g., a call for content endorsed by a professional organization such as NCTM) and charisma (e.g., promoted by a teacher or administrator with the personality needed to get teacher acceptance). To the extent a school policy is seen as authoritative by teachers, they will be persuaded to teach the content called for. School policies designed to support common goals for student achievement can also gain strength through the use of rewards and sanctions. (Spady and Mitchell, 1978, call these appeals to power.)

At least according to sociological theory, then, the authority of a testing program can be enhanced by having, for example, adequate teacher involvement in its selection or development, the endorsement of individuals seen as subject matter specialists, being formally adopted by the school, and promoted by a principal (or other school official) with the kind of personality needed to enlist teacher support. The power of a testing program can be established in a variety of ways as well. One approach being used by some states (e.g., Florida) and districts is to tie grade-to-grade promotion to performance on achievement tests. Staff development programs designed to make all teachers feel comfortable in teaching all desired content may also be an important part of building a strong school testing program.

Unfortunately, these suggestions for building strong testing programs that are supportive of shared goals for student achievement among teachers are based more on theory than on actual research. Research that systematically investigates what attributes make for strong school policies is needed. The results should be of interest to those seeking to implement the five factors identified with effective schools. They would also be of interest to administrators at the district level who believe that a standard curriculum is desirable to cope with high student and teacher mobility. ■

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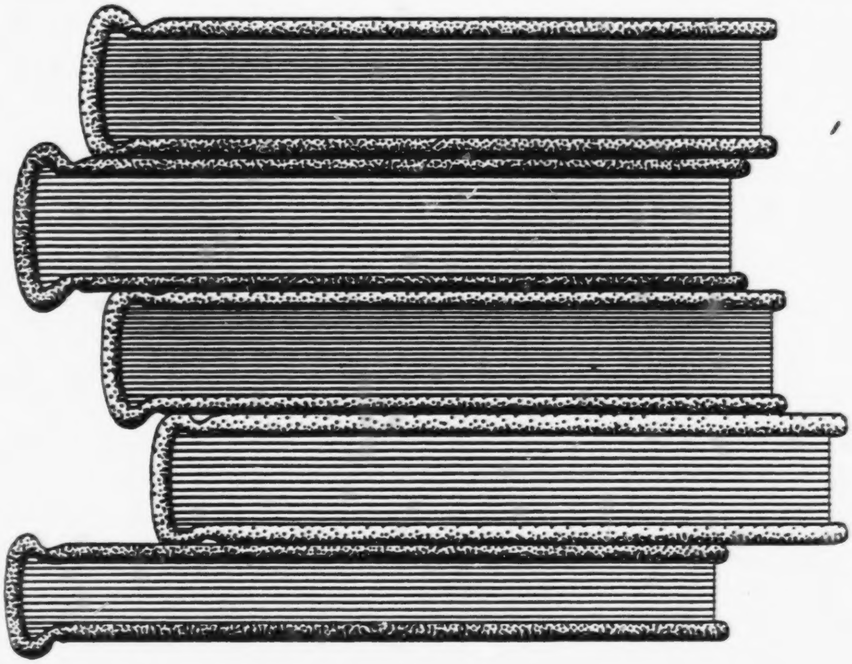
# Academic Press: Translating High Expectations into School Policies and Classroom Practices

Schoolwide policies are the foundation for practices that promote behaviors leading to achievement and positive self-concept.



JOSEPH F. MURPHY, MARSHA WEIL, PHILIP HALLINGER, AND ALEXIS MITMAN

The School Effectiveness Program[1] in Santa Clara County, California, has been working for the past two years to determine the key behavioral aspects of the generally accepted effective schools variables (See Benbow, 1980; Hallinger, 1981; Sweeney, 1982). One particularly important effectiveness variable is academic press.

Academic press is the degree to which environmental forces press for student achievement on a schoolwide basis. The concept, however, is broader than high staff expectations; it pulls together various forces—school policies, practices, expectations, norms, and rewards—generated by both staff and students. Together, these forces constitute the academic "environment" experienced by students and press them to respond in particular ways, specifically, to work hard in school and to do well academically.

Our primary task was to find out the connection between staff beliefs and the academic press outcomes of student academic norms, self-concept of academic ability, and sense of academic futility (Brookover and others, 1978, 1982). Brookover and his colleagues (1982) defined student academic norms as the "prevailing standards for emphasis on

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grades, amount of time devoted to homework, and the importance of academic work compared to non-academic activities" (p. 59). Self-concept of academic ability refers to the belief that one is capable of high academic achievement, while a sense of academic efficacy is the belief that one's efforts can make a difference in school.

In particular, we wanted to determine how staff beliefs about students' ability to master basic skills, earn good grades, complete school successfully, and go on to higher education become translated into school and classroom behaviors.

We maintain that high staff expectations for students are translated into (1) school level policies and enforcement practices, and (2) classroom-level practices and behavior, which consistently communicate to students that success in academic work is expected and attainable. As shown in Figure 1, staff beliefs are more likely to be incorporated into policies and practices when they are translated through a school norm of staff responsibility for student learning.

Before proceeding to a discussion of school policies and classroom practices, it is important to point out that the direction of influence in our model is speculative. We are unsure whether staff beliefs encourage use of the policies and practices we discuss or whether academic press is merely an effective rubric for certain school and classroom activities not necessarily the result of staff beliefs. Our working hypothesis is that the first position is more accurate.

### School Organizational Policies

Our work on school organization and effective schools has led us to believe school policies can play a predominant role in creating effective schools.

*The importance of policy at the school level.* The notion that school systems and schools themselves are loosely coupled entities is one of the most alluring and powerful models of school organization in the literature (Weick, 1976; Meyer and Rowan, 1975; Deal and Celotti, 1977). In loosely coupled schools, the connections between district offices and schools and between school offices and individual classrooms are tenuous for a number of reasons, including lack of consensus about school goals, the absence of a clear instructional technology, the constant flow of people into and out of the school community, and the semiprofessional characteristics associated with schools (Cohen and others, 1972; Lortie, 1975; Deal and Celotti, 1977; Cohen and Miller, 1980). The basic tenet of loose coupling is that the lack of tight organizational connections substantially reduces the capacity of one organizational level or component (for instance, the principal) to influence the activity of other organizational levels or components (such as teachers or students).

At the same time, some models of schools indicate that principals, at least, may have a significant impact on classroom activity and, subsequently, student achievement and behavior. These models are basically of two types, those employing traditional organizational perspectives (Bossert and others, 1981; Murphy and others, 1982), and social systems models (Lezotte and others, n.d.; Weiss and Hawkins, 1979; Rutter and others, 1979; Wynne, 1980; Brookover and others, 1982). All of these models share a belief that school policies and practices can influence teachers and students in ways consistent with school goals. That such policies actually do influence student achievement and behavior is currently being validated (Wellisch and others, 1978; Stallings and Mohlman, 1981).

The entire area of school-level policy analysis is relatively new. Individual schools have traditionally been thought of as implementers rather than initiators of policy. However, as we gather more evidence that school policies can influence student achievement, we expect schools to increasingly become the focus of policy analysis. We also expect this analysis to show the way to resolving the dilemma between the general notions of "schools as loosely coupled organizations" and "school effectiveness." The former is a fairly accurate description of the nature of many American public school systems—a description of what is. The latter is an analysis of what can be (Duckworth, 1981; Gersten and Carnine, 1981). Although there are numerous ways to reconcile these two different conclusions about schools (Deal and Celotti, 1977), we believe the most important method is by tightening couplings through school-

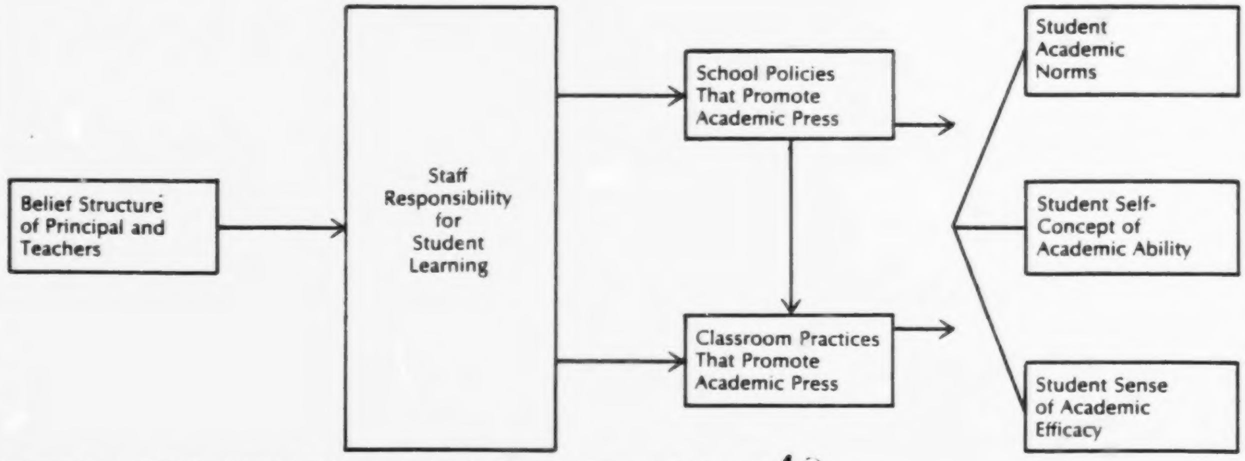

Belief Structure of Principal and Teachers
Staff Responsibility for Student Learning
School Policies That Promote Academic Press
Classroom Practices That Promote Academic Press
Student Academic Norms
Student Self-Concept of Academic Ability
Student Sense of Academic Efficacy

**Figure 1. A Working Model of How Academic Press is Created in Schools**

level policies and enforcement practices.

Policy is not the only area that needs to be considered as we move from loosely coupled organizations to effective schools. There should be a logical movement from policy to practice to behavior (Borwich, 1977; Squires and others, 1981); thus, the role of school and classroom practices and behaviors in our own model. Attempting to work from behaviors towards policies in a loosely coupled organization is to invite failure. This point takes on significance when we stop to consider that traditional supervision models work primarily on specific behaviors with discrete and unconnected organizational units, that is, teachers (Weick, 1976; Lortie, 1975).

*School-level policies that communicate high expectations.* There are at least two areas of school activity where policies can communicate high expectations to students. In Figure 2, we have grouped them under the headings of policies on school function and structure and policies on student progress (See Figure 2).

*Policies on school function and structure.* Within function and structure, the first policy area is *school purpose.* It is clear both from the organization theory literature (Perrow, 1970) and the school effectiveness literature (Lezotte and others, n.d.; Benbow, 1980; Hallinger, 1981) that schools that promote academic achievement have clearly defined goals based on academic matters. Given the pressures within educational organizations for attaining multiple and oftentimes conflicting goals and goal displacement (Perrow, 1970), and the fact that many school systems have acquiesced to these pressures (Cohen and others, 1972), perhaps the most important thing schools can do to promote high expectations is to frame school purpose policies in terms of one or two academic goals, which can in turn provide the framework for all other school activity (Lezotte and others, n.d.).

A second important policy area that eals with school function and structure *student grouping*. Brookover and oth (1982) and Squires (1980) point out that methods used to group students clearly convey academic expectations to them. According to these authors, policies that promote ability grouping create de facto differences in levels of educational aspirations for children. Once these aspirations are established and communicated, they tend to become self-fulfilling. On the other hand, school policies on instructional grouping that promote the belief that all students can achieve grade-level objectives (for instance, mastery learning) convey to all that the school expects, demands, and works to ensure high levels of student achievement for all students.

**Figure 2. School Policies and Classroom Practices That Convey Academic Press**

| School Policy Areas | Classroom Practices Areas |
|---|---|
| Policies on School Function and Structure<br>— school purpose<br>— student grouping<br>— protection of instructional time<br>— orderly environment | Establishing an Academically Demanding Climate<br>Conducting an Orderly, Well-Managed Classroom |
| Policies on Student Progress<br>— homework<br>— grading<br>— monitoring progress<br>— remediation<br>— reporting progress<br>— retention/promotion | Ensuring Student Academic Success<br>Implementing Instructional Practices That Promote Student Achievement<br>Providing Opportunities for Student Responsibility and Leadership |

School policies that *protect instructional time* constitute a third area associated with increased academic press. Stallings and Mohlman (1981) found that clear and consistently enforced school policies on student attendance and tardiness helped produce an atmosphere of high academic expectations while reducing tardiness and absence rates. In addition, Stallings, Needles, and Stayrook (Stallings and Mohlman, 1981) studied school policies on interruptions of classroom instructional time, such as announcements over the public address system and requests for students to come to the office. They found that when instructional time in reading was protected by school policies that minimized interruptions, students scored higher in basic reading skills. They hypothesize that such policies create an understanding that academic learning time is too important to be interrupted—in short, that they promote the general norm of academic press.

The final policy area under school function and structure is *orderly environment*. Policies that promote an orderly and safe school environment have consistently been shown to be related to student achievement (Rutter and others, 1979; Phi Delta Kappa, 1980; Wynne, 1980). When the school staff takes time to develop and enforce policies about appropriate student behavior, they are telling students that school is for learning and that behavior that interferes with learning opportunities will not be tolerated. Wynne (1980) and Stallings and Mohlman (1981) have shown that such policies help create and convey high expectations for student achievement.

*Policies on student progress.* Six policies in the area of student progress seem to be related to academic press. The first is a *homework policy*. Where homework is an integral part of the students' day and is consistently used throughout the school, it clearly helps establish high expectations for students. Likewise, when an incrementally based schoolwide *grading policy* is monitored by the principal, academic press is enhanced (Wynne, 1980; Brookover and others, 1982).

In similar fashion, a schoolwide *policy on monitoring student performance* in conjunction with instructional objectives communicates to students that they are held responsible for and expected to learn a specific amount of information and range of skills (Edmonds and Frederiksen, 1978; Wynne, 1980). *Remediation policies* that base remediation efforts on the common instructional framework not only help ensure student mastery but promote academic press as well, as do policies that prevent students from entering permanent remediation groups (Brookover and others, 1982).

Schools in which policies require that *progress reports* be sent to the parents of all students numerous times a year convey to students and parents the importance the staff places on academic work. In a similar vein, a policy that parents to pick up student report cards at school and meet with their children's teachers helps build the general norm of academic press.

Finally, a school policy on retention and promotion which makes promotion dependent on student mastery of basic grade level skills acts to communicate high staff expectations and build academic press (Wellisch and others, 1978).

### Classroom Level Practices and Behaviors

Within the framework of a school policy approach to developing and maintaining high academic expectations for students, teacher practices and behaviors can be significant. The material in this section is drawn from the available information within the school effectiveness literature about connections between teacher behaviors and academic press (Rutter and others, 1979; Squires, 1980; Wynne, 1980; Brookover and others, 1982) and our own work at the School Effectiveness Program.

We have identified five broad categories of teacher practices and behaviors that contribute to academic press in the classroom: (1) establishing an academically demanding climate; (2) conducting an orderly, well-managed classroom; (3) ensuring student academic success; (4) implementing instructional practices that promote student achievement; and (5) providing opportunities for student responsibility and leadership (see Figure 2). These categories are not intended to cover all the ways in which teachers can build academic press. Neither are the behaviors discussed within categories complete. Rather they are examples of how teacher expectations are translated and communicated to children.

One of the most direct ways teachers create academic press is by *establishing an academically demanding climate.* Teachers do this by setting rigorous demands in terms of course content to be covered, by making clear course requirements and specific instructional objectives, by setting high work standards for *all* students, by regularly assigning homework (with prompt follow-up and correction), by devoting a high percentage of class time to learning tasks with a strong academic focus, and by communicating with the parents of students who are experiencing academic problems. Underlying this rigorous academic climate is a belief that all students can succeed. Thus, teachers interact with all students in a similar manner. They do not call on some students and leave out others. They prompt all students to correct or improve responses. Praise is given when it is deserved. Less able students do not receive empty praise.

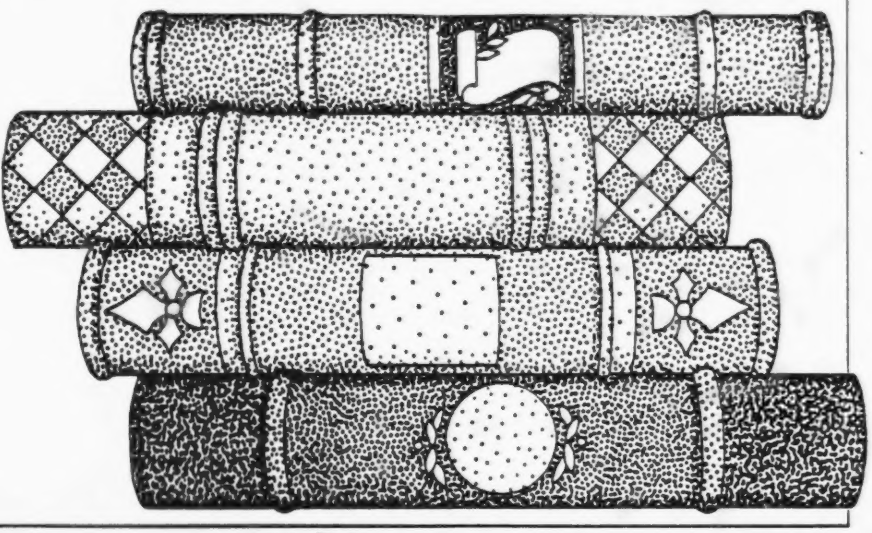
A second category is *conducting an orderly well-managed classroom.* When classrooms are well-managed, learning occurs, more time is devoted to instruction, and self-concepts are enhanced. It is difficult to establish a demanding academic climate in a chaotic classroom. Practices that contribute to an orderly classroom include establishing clear rules and procedures and enforcing them consistently and fairly, organizing the physical environment to prevent disruption, and promptly handling student disruptions.

*Ensuring student academic success* is a third component of academic press in the classroom. In addition to making demands, teachers communicate that they expect students to do well by structuring opportunities for students to succeed. While all the practices discussed in this section are important, we believe this is the most important. When teachers fail to provide opportunities for students to reach high expectations, teacher efforts in other areas are not likely to be particularly helpful. Some practices that have potential for ensuring student success are selecting instructional objectives that are appropriate for the student's level, giving students plenty of opportunity to receive instruction in one objective before moving on to the next, being available on a regular basis to assist students in their work, letting students know they have been successful by providing many opportunities for assessment and positive feedback, and by rewarding students for improving, not just reaching, absolute levels of achievement.

It is also important that teachers *implement instructional practices that promote achievement.* Devoting time to clear, complete explanations of new material; providing sufficient opportunity for teacher-directed, structured practice before students work on their own; giving students corrective feedback if their responses are incorrect; providing sufficient practice in new material; closely monitoring students' work; assessing frequently; and implementing cooperative goal structures all promote student achievement.

Finally, teachers promote academic press by *providing opportunities for student responsibility and leadership.* By holding students responsible for their own work, by demanding accountability, and by giving students the chance to exercise power, teachers communicate that students are expected to succeed and that the ability to do so is under their control.

Two final points need to be made here. First, a demanding academic press is most successful with all students if done in a supportive environment—where a concerned, helpful teacher is



interested in students' ideas and problems and where class context promotes students' concern and caring for one another. Satisfying human relationships are a necessary but insufficient condition for student learning. Second, teachers themselves need to model appropriate academic press behaviors. Specifically, they need to plan their lessons in advance, start classes on time, and stay on-task.

## Conclusion

We have attempted to show how academic press is created and how high expectations are communicated to students. Our model of academic press relies on both school-level policies and enforcement practices, as well as classroom level practices and behaviors. Academic press can be maximized when school level policies and enforcement practices form the framework for classroom-level activity. This integrated policy-practice-behavior framework is essential in moving from loosely coupled [illegible] effective schools.☐

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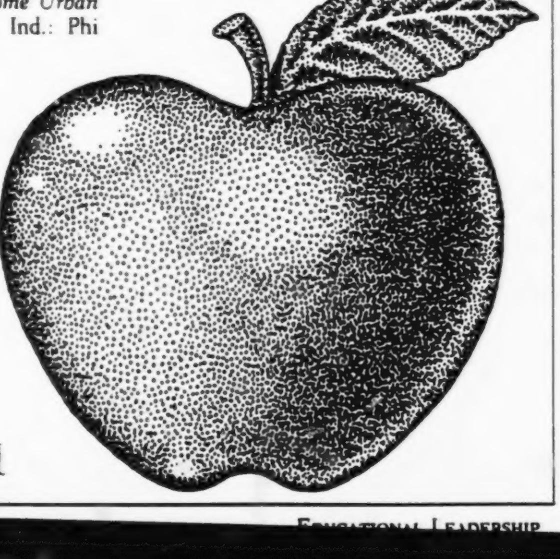

WORKING DRAFT

# APPROACHING THE RESEARCH
# ON
# EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS
# AND
# EFFECTIVE CLASSROOMS

Compiled by:

Thomas Mullikin
PA Department of Education

May, 1982

# APPROACHING THE RESEARCH ON EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS AND EFFECTIVE CLASSROOMS

Much process-product research in the last five to ten years has produced a collection of teacher characteristics which appear to impact favorably upon student achievement. Unlike earlier research which identified such causes as home environment, I.Q., cultural and economic influences for lack of student achievement, this current research is telling us that there are classrooms in schools where children are successful, regardless of what resources they bring or do not bring to the learning situation. And, these students' successes are based upon the actions of the classroom teacher, interactions between students and teacher, and a school-wide commitment to learning.

In addition to this teacher effectiveness research there is a collection of related variables found in effective school research. All the effective school findings are similar and indicate that there are schools which are influencing student achievement. Ronald Edmonds, of the University of Michigan, has summarized the research by saying that:

> ...this discussion is not the nature of theory, and it's not the nature of invention. It is a description of discoveries - of school environments that exist right now and that are being managed by men and women who are neither more virtuous nor more intelligent than the rest of us. The lesson it teaches for all of us is that these characteristics that describe effective schools are practical, they're obtainable, and if we're serious enough and systematic and thoughtful enough it means they can come to describe all of the schools that we work in.

Before looking at some of the specific research findings, it is necessary to understand how the research was produced. Process-product research is conducted by researchers going into schools and classrooms, observing what happens, recording those observations, and reporting them. The assumption is that there is a correlation between the actions of effective school staff and the achievement of their students. Effective classrooms, for this research, are identified as those where students score well on achievement tests. Given these conditions, the research findings appear to represent a collection of attitudes, skills and techniques which can be achieved by all school staff.

While the effective school research provides a base for improving teaching and learning, application of that research should be viewed in light of the following:

1. Most effective school research was conducted in urban settings, particularly in elementary schools.

2. School effectiveness has been defined in terms of student achievement with basic skills.

3. Lists of variables cannot be viewed as separate and distinct behaviors, neither should one be viewed as more important than another. Instead, they should be thought of collectively, all working together.

4. Classroom effectiveness is more likely when teachers view a collection of related variables in light of students and curriculum.

Donald Medley, of the University of Virginia, has carefully reviewed these research projects. He warns us that:

> There do not appear to be any universal teaching competencies ...that are appropriate in all teaching circumstances. Teachers must not only master particular skills but know when to use them. Consequently, research linking teacher behavior to student outcomes can provide input into teacher education and teacher accountability schemes, but it does not translate into lists of fixed 'universal' learning objectives or evaluation criteria.

IN ORDER TO DEVELOP AN AWARENESS OF THE RESEARCH, THE FOLLOWING PAGES CONTAIN MANY OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS AS THEY RELATE TO SCHOOLS AND TEACHING. THE READER SHOULD NOTE THAT SOME OF THE FINDINGS CONFLICT. THIS ONLY ENHANCES THE FACT THAT ALL THESE FINDINGS MUST BE VIEWED AS A WHOLE, AND DECISIONS MUST BE MADE ABOUT THE KINDS OF THINGS THAT ARE MOST LIKELY TO IMPACT LOCALLY.

# EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Listed here are the characteristics of schools that exist right now and have increased student achievement.

The research: The Rand Report, Stuart Rankin, Klitzgaard and Hall, Ronald Edmonds, Walter Brookover and Lawrence Lezotte

The findings:

- effective schools hold high expectations for students and teachers
- effective schools monitor student progress carefully, report results and use them to improve teaching
- effective schools maintain an academic emphasis and students have the opportunity to learn expected content
- effective schools use materials at the appropriate level of difficulty
- effective schools maintain more praise than criticism
- effective schools assure adequate time-on-task through teacher planning and classroom management
- effective schools have strong, successful programs in the early grades - a longer instructional day, with a strict basic skills curriculum
- effective schools exhibit an orderly environment and maintain uniform standards for discipline
- effective school principals exhibit strong leadership qualities
- effective schools recognize and understand cultural differences in children

# EFFECTIVE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Walter Brookover, of the University of Michigan, has researched effective secondary schools and found the following variables:

- a belief that students can learn
- a belief that teachers can teach their students
- a belief by students that they can learn and be successful in school
- high expectations for student success and high academic standards
- clear norms of appropriate behavior
- a manageable school size
- a principal who is an assertive instructional leader
- a teacher as instructor to all students and responsible for learning
- a student as learner with the stress on academic achievement and appropriate behavior
- clear and sought after school goals and objectives
- reinforcement - rewards and praise for students
- direct, whole group instruction
- increased time-on-task
- regular monitoring or assessment of student learning and school effectiveness
- student team cooperation and learning

In addition to the characteristics for effective schools, the following have been found to describe successes in a variety of rural settings:

The research: The Journalism Research Fellowship Report, National School Public Relations Association.

The findings:

- effective rural schools assess community social dynamics to develop "grass roots efforts" for approaching learning
- rural school issues are community issues
- rural schools maintain total immersion in the community
- rural school curriculum, while emphasizing the academics, provides skills, attitudes and understandings for a real world
- rural schools maintain effective career education and work study programs
- after-school activities are often conducted by members of the community (sewing, choir, football)
- effective rural secondary schools encourage adults to attend classes
- students work together, with older students helping younger ones (particuarly in elementary schools)
- effective rural schools take advantage of their setting and maintain environmental education programs
- effective rural school districts work together, pulling resources from a central location (e.g. intermediate units, central computer centers, public television) and tend to share specialized staff
- effective rural schools maintain a strict discipline code
- staff in effective rural schools tend to live in and be a part of the community
- effective rural schools provide on-going staff development and growth

## EFFECTIVE URBAN SCHOOLS

In addition to the research for school effectiveness listed on p. 3, most of which was conducted in urban settings, specific variables stand out in many of the schools.

The research: Ronald Edmonds, Federal Reserve Bank Study, Walter Brookover and Lawrence Lezotte.

The findings:

- an instructional emphasis on basic skills
- a school climate conducive to learning
- an ongoing assessment of pupil progress
- high expectations for student learning; no children are permitted to fall below realistic levels of achievement
- strong school leadership and support
- the knowledge and use of appropriate principles of learning
- an instructional emphasis and commitment to teaching and learning the basic skills
    - including social studies, reading, language development and science*
    - with less allocated time for mathematics, physical education and health*
    - with a large number of adult volunteers in mathematics classes*
- high levels of parent involvement
- limited use of classroom instructional groups
- fewer paid aides in reading classes*

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*See Edmonds, R., Effective schools for the urban poor. Educational Leadership, October, 1978, pp. 15-24.

## EFFECTIVE CLASSROOMS FOR LOW ACHIEVERS

In classrooms where children with histories of failure have achieved, the following characteristics were found:

The Research: Jane Stallings, Jere Brophy, Carolyn Evertson

The Findings:

- material is used at an appropriate level of difficulty, to maintain high levels of success
- high expectations are held for all students
- teachers provide high quality of feedback; praise is specific and encouraging
- cultural, family and sex differences do not influence teacher expectations
- teachers are warm and encouraging, less businesslike and demanding
- teachers are personal with students
- teachers take time from academics to handle concerns and to motivate students
- teachers allow time for students to respond when called upon, often providing hints, rephrasing a question, or probing
- information is overtaught to the point of overlearning -- progressing in small steps to allow for mastery
- teachers spend more time instructing, discussing homework, providing feedback, reading aloud, and less time with seatwork-type activities
- most forms of individualized instruction appear to involve unrealistic expectations about the degree to which students in the early grades can manage their learning independently

# EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM TIME-ON-TASK

One of the single most important factors in explaining, predicting and controlling achievement is TIME for learning.

The research: John Carroll, Jane Stallings, The Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study, Texas Junior High Study

The findings:

- greater allocated time (time for instruction) is associated with learning success
- student engaged time, or "time-on-task," increases learning success
- the amount of engaged time is influenced by student success rate
- careful teacher planning is necessary to increase student engaged time
- academic learning occurs when allocated time, student engaged time and student success rate are applied simultaneously
- attention to student engaged time in the early grades has strong impact upon student achievement in basic skills
- teacher inattention to students because of a long contact with an individual student causes more group off-task time
- greater time-on-task is produced when teacher-led activities (teacher reading, teacher demonstration) occur and long periods of student talk (recitations) are avoided. Teacher retains control over pacing
- during individual seatwork higher involvement is produced by lessons that are programmed in a step-by-step method
- student attention is much more easily diverted during seatwork
- teacher-structured transitions reduce off-task time

# EXPECTATIONS

In effective schools and classrooms, principals and staff expected all students to behave in specific ways and attain certain levels of achievement. All students receive an equal opportunity to learn.

The research: Thomas Good, Jere Brophy, Carolyn Evertson, Ronald Edmonds, Stuart Rankin, Barak Rosenshine

The findings:

- teachers allow adequate time for a student to respond to a question
- teachers rely more on praise than criticism and are specific with their praise (for example, "Your handwriting on the spelling paper was one of your best," rather than "You're doing a nice job.")
- teachers respond and interact with all students equally, rather than favoring the "high-expectation" students
- teachers direct questions to specific students rather than to those who volunteer
- students will conform with teacher expectations (e.g., expecting a child with a past history of poor behavior to continue as such, or expecting a child to perform like an older sibling, or expecting girls to achieve more in first grade reading than boys)
- teacher expectations have the greatest influence in the primary grades
- teachers maintain an academic emphasis in a no-nonsense, business-like atmosphere
- teachers recognize and understand cultural differences in children
- teachers respond to children with other cultural backgrounds

Good classroom management refers to "anything that the teacher (does) to organize students, space, time and materials so that instruction in content and student learning activities could take place." (Anderson and others.)

The Research: Linda Anderson, Carolyn Evertson, Edmund Emmer, Jere Brophy and Joyce Putnam, Thomas Good, Jacob Kounin, Jane Stallings

The findings:

- students are held accountable for completing work within allotted time
- teachers review work with class upon completion
- teachers regularly and systematically circulate through the room during seatwork activities
- materials and supplies are made ready in advance of the lesson
- students are taught the skills necessary for performing school work (how to locate a workbook page, translate board directions)
- students are taught the skills for going to school (use of coat room, how to line up, how to sharpen pencils)
- desks and chairs are arranged toward a classroom focal point
- pacing is brisk and material is at an appropriate level of difficulty
- there is greater reliance on praise rather than criticism
- teachers are aware of each student's ability to attend to learning tasks ("with-itness")
- students are held accountable for their responses
- effective managers establish classroom procedures beginning with the first day of school
- effective managers in the early grades keep tasks to brief, focused periods of time, provide immediate feedback and monitor student engagement and success rate
- student progress is monitored carefully

The research has determined a number of techniques for delivery of the curriculum which increases student learning, increases student engaged time and organizes the learning situation.

The research: Madeline Hunter, Jere Brophy, Jane Stallings, Texas Junior High School Study, Ronald Edmonds, Benjamin Bloom, Thomas Good & Douglas Grouws

The findings:

- the direct instruction approach (closely directed, monitored and controlled by the teacher) seems to be appropriate for certain types of students and has been found effective for cognitive skill learning (e.g. mathematics)
- purpose, lecture, demonstration, recitation, drill and practice are techniques associated with high achievement
- the mastery learning approach (a flexible teaching process which stresses student engaged time, rate of learning, diagnostic/prescriptive techniques, and mastery of one level of learning before moving on to higher levels) is appropriate for some children and some curriculum areas
- factors affecting motivation to learn include concern, feeling, tone, success, interest, knowledge of results, extrinsic and intrinsic reward
- factors affecting rate and degree of learning include reinforcement, active participation, practice, level of aspiration, modeling, vividness and sequence
- a student "mind set" for a lesson increases understanding
- use of student input increases level of participation
- teachers are aware of students' prior learning and plan the instructional event accordingly
- teachers minimize individualized and small-group instruction in an effort to maintain student engaged time; minimal use of seatwork
- teachers select and direct all classroom activities

# EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Effective schools have effective leaders. Much of what the school does to promote achievement is within the principal's power to influence and control. Specifically, there are six leadership behaviors that have been consistently associated with schools that are well managed and whose students achieve.

Effective principals:

1. EMPHASIZE ACHIEVEMENT. They give high priority to activities, instruction, and materials that foster academic success. Effective principals are visible and involved in what goes on in the school and its classrooms. They convey to teachers their commitment to achievement.

2. SET INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES. They take part in instructional decision making and accept responsibility for decisions about methods, materials, and evaluation procedures. They develop plans for solving students' learning problems.

3. PROVIDE AN ORDERLY ATMOSPHERE. They do what is necessary to ensure that the school's climate is conducive to learning: it is quiet, pleasant, and well-maintained.

4. FREQUENTLY EVALUATE STUDENT PROGRESS. They monitor student achievement on a regular basis. Principals set expectations for the entire school and check to make sure those expectations are being met. They know how well their students are performing as compared to students in other schools.

5. COORDINATE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS. They interrelate course content, sequences of objectives, and materials in all grades. They see that what goes on in the classroom has bearing on the overall goals and program of the school.

6. SUPPORT TEACHERS. Effective principals communicate with teachers about goals and procedures. They support teachers' attendance at professional meetings and workshops, and provide inservice that promotes improved teaching.

From: Sweeney, James. Research synthesis on effective school leadership. Educational Leadership, 1982, 39:5, 346-352.

# SYNTHESIZING THE RESEARCH

These research findings indicate what effective schools are doing to impact upon student achievement. At the same time, the effective teacher research identifies specific attitudes, skills, techniques and behaviors in classrooms which support effective schools. Both research groups must be viewed together if schools are to influence each student's achievement over a period of time.

An examination of all the literature will allow districts to:

1. identify strengths and weaknesses through local needs assessment
2. select priority areas
3. develop action plans for implementation strategies and staff development programs
4. identify and use available resources.

Effective schools synthesize the following:

1. The SCHOOL MISSION, understood by students, teachers, administrators and the community, is a COMMITMENT to learning.
2. Strong INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP is present.
3. Teachers maintain continuous PROFESSIONAL GROWTH.
4. All students are EXPECTED TO LEARN.
5. The school ensures a positive LEARNING ENVIRONMENT.
6. The school MONITORS STUDENT PROGRESS within a carefully planned and articulated program.
7. Students, staff, and community COOPERATE and take responsibility for their respective roles.
8. School TIME is used for planning, instructing and learning.

Each of the eight qualities listed below and on p. 13 are behaviors, attitudes and skills for effective school leaders (principals) and effective classroom leaders (teachers). These qualities are an organization for bringing all the research findings together for development of a school-wide effectiveness program.

| Quality | Effectiveness of Schools | Effectiveness of Classrooms |
|---|---|---|
| MISSION | The school-wide mission, understood by students, teachers and community, is a commitment to learning and maintenance of a positive attitude toward learning. | Learning is the priority of students and teachers. Both understand their role and contribution to the total school mission and maintain a positive environment. |
| LEADERSHIP | The school leader manages resources and time efficiently and effectively. | Teachers select and direct learning activities and are responsible for the delivery of the curriculum. Teachers are positive role-models. |
| PROFESSIONAL GROWTH | The school leader maintains professional growth and provides for staff development. | Teachers continue professional growth in their content area and its delivery |
| EXPECTATIONS | High expectations are held for all students and staff. Students are expected to learn; teachers are expected to teach. | |
| ENVIRONMENT | The school maintains consistent policies dealing with students and staff; there is pride in school and school accomplishments, a sense of responsibility, use of praise and reward, and concern for the welfare of all people in the building. | The teacher strives to increase student engaged time, manages learning and learners effectively and efficiently, uses appropriate techniques and materials, is committed to achievement, cares about students and provides a pleasant and orderly environment. |
| EVALUATION | The school monitors student progress and reports results to parents and community. The school evaluates its effectiveness regularly. | The teacher monitors student progress regularly, both formally and informally, and adjusts presentation and curriculum to achieve mastery. |
| COOPERATION | The school leader interacts with staff, students and community to ensure cooperation and an equal opportunity for all to learn. | Students and teachers cooperate and and assume responsibility for their respective roles. |
| TIME | The school provides adequate time for instruction with minimal interruptions and provides time for staff to plan and develop meaningful classroom instructional events. | The teacher maintains sufficient student engaged time to achieve a high degree of student success. |

## BASIC SKILLS

Another factor which Edmonds and his colleagues associated with effective schools was a building-wide emphasis on basic skills. Basic skills to Edmonds included reading and mathematics, and progress in these areas was determined by analyzing pupil performance scores on tests like the Stanford Achievement Test and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. According to Edmonds (1978), "effective schools get that way partly by making it clear that pupil acquisition of basic school skills takes precedence over all other school activities. When necessary school energy and resources can be diverted from other business in furtherance of the fundamental [basic skills] objectives."

Other researchers have noted a similar relationship between effective schools and a well-organized program to establish basic instructional goals and to give these goals top priority in school practice. In the Phi Delta Kappa Study of Exceptional Urban Elementary Schools (Duckett et al., 1980), the emphasis on a well-coordinated basic skills program district wide -- from the selection of appropriate materials to common testing practices -- was highlighted in several significant case studies. The Phi Delta Kappa report also related the mathematics and reading emphasis to one district's homework policy and the expectations that school had for children learning basic skills information both in school and at home.

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Brookover (1980) maintained that his earlier study of improving and declining schools (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979) had found "that the improving schools had clearly understood and stated basic skill objectives while the declining schools either did not identify the objectives or rejected them as inappropriate for their students." In association with the Committee on Research and Theory of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), Brookover (Brookover et al., 1980) defined basic skills more broadly than Edmonds' rather narrow definition. Brookover associated the concept with a series of related subgoals:

> Goal One: Basic Skills
>
> *Subgoals*
>
> 1. Acquires information and meaning through observing, listening, and reading
> 2. Processes the acquired information and meaning through skills of reflective thinking
> 3. Shares information and expresses meaning, speaking, writing, and nonverbal means
> 4. Acquires information and meaning through the use of mathematical symbcis
> 5. Manipulates symbols and uses mathematical reasoning
> 6. Shares information and expresses meaning through the use of mathematical symbols (Brookover et al., 1980, p. 9)

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According to Brookover and the ASCD Committee, basic skills include a broad set of functional skills, not items of content and not just the 3Rs. This conceptualization permitted Brookover to see basic skills as the prerequisite to all other goals in an educational hierarchy and the essential ingredient of what education is about throughout the entire school. This unique relationship of basic skills to the attainment of all other goals presented by the ASCD Committee was illustrated:

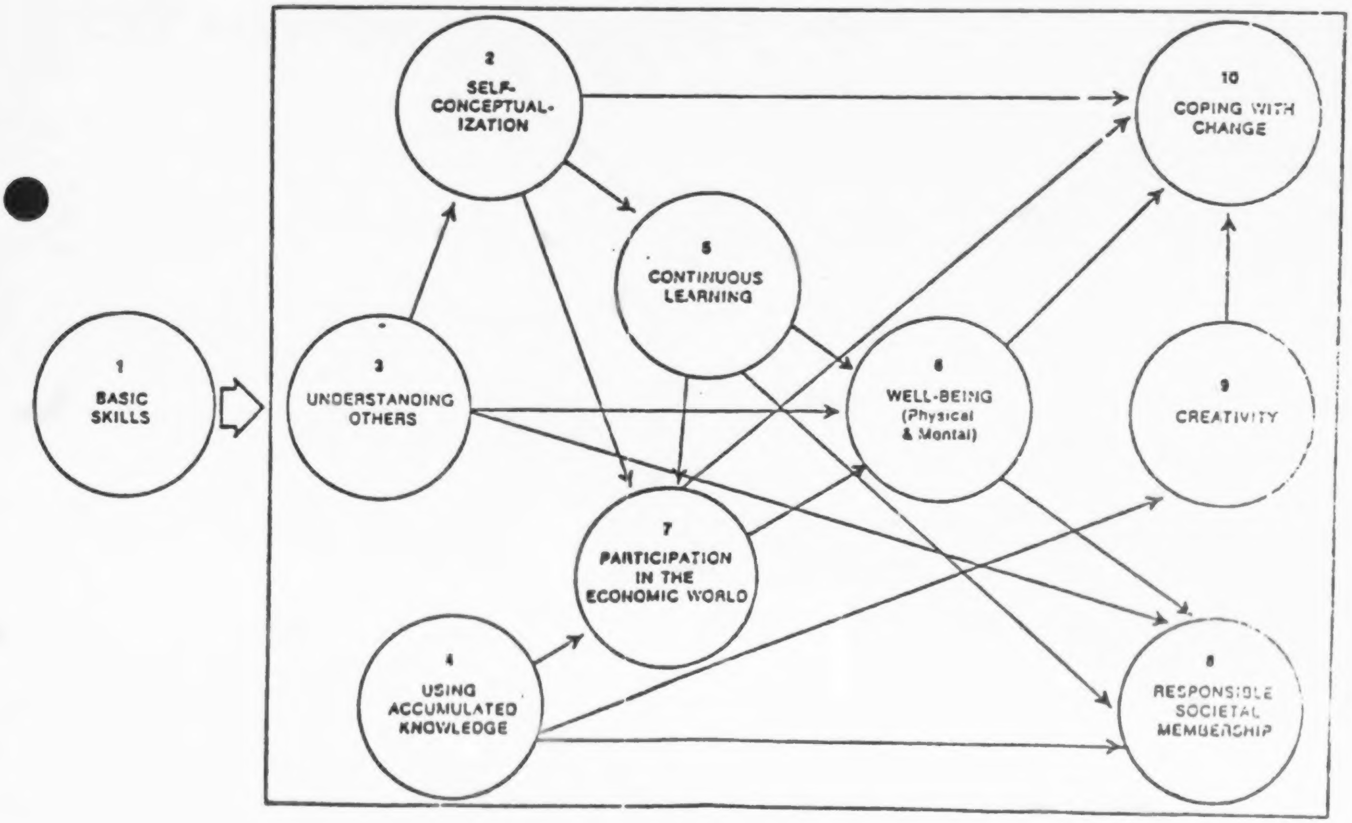
1
BASIC SKILLS
2
SELF-CONCEPTUALIZATION
3
UNDERSTANDING OTHERS
4
USING ACCUMULATED KNOWLEDGE
5
CONTINUOUS LEARNING
6
WELL-BEING (Physical & Mental)
7
PARTICIPATION IN THE ECONOMIC WORLD
8
RESPONSIBLE SOCIETAL MEMBERSHIP
9
CREATIVITY
10
COPING WITH CHANGE

**Diagram of Goal Relationships** (from Brookover et al., 1980, p. 14)

As Brookover saw the three aspects of the schools' total learning environment interrelated, he maintained that basic skills was the integral part of the school's total goal structure.

Brookover and Lezotte's (1979) view of a school staff was directly related to the role of basic skills in a particular elementary school. "The improving schools are clearly different from the declining schools in the emphasis their staff places on the accomplishment of basic reading and methematics objectives. The improving schools accept and emphasize the importance of these goals and objectives, while the declining schools give much less emphasis to such objectives and certainly do not specify them as fundamental goals of their program." In addition, the Michigan researchers found that the teachers and principals in the improving schools are much more likely to assume responsibility for teaching the basic reading and math skills and are much more committed to doing so. Reflecting on the related factor of teacher attitude, Brookover and Lezotte found that "the staffs of the declining schools feel there is not much that teachers can do to influence the achievement of their students. They tend to displace the responsibility for skill learning on the parents or the students themselves."

Judging by the findings of surveys such as the one conducted in New York by Edmonds (1980), it is clear that more than a verbal commitment to basic skills is needed. Specific plans and programs for implementing basic skills instruction are needed. It is such plans and programs which are the school's response to overcoming the societal factors which were

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central to the Coleman Report (Coleman et al., 1966). According to Edmonds (1980), the basic skills issue was the most vital concern in combatting the "schools-don't-make-a-difference" policy:

> The third and, perhaps most important premise is that pupil acquisition of basic school skills is not determined by family background. It is the school response to family background that determines pupil performance.

Based on the various research findings, it is clear that the teaching of basic skills appears to be closely related to the other factors for effective schooling, especially administrative leadership and teacher expectations. Edmonds and Frederiksen's (1979) study of Michigan schools found that effective schools tend to have fewer compensatory education programs, fewer students enrolled in special mathematics and English courses, and few students separated into ability groups. Improving school teachers expect all students to learn basic skills and treat them accordingly. Thus, Edmonds and Frederiksen concluded, "with regard to one of the most fundamental characteristics of an elementary school curriculum, there is a clear relationship between school effectiveness and mixing students of varying abilities and backgrounds."

The emphasis on teaching basic skills is related to the administrator's need to exert instructional leadership. In the studies of both Madden and of Brookover and Lezotte, administrators not only provided instructional leadership, but "developed a plan for dealing with the reading problem" in the first case (California State Department, 1977), and assumed responsibility for the "evaluation of the achievement of basic objectives" in the second case (Brookover and Lezotte, 1979). Basic

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skills seem to be a major focus of administrative leadership in effective schools.

The research findings underline the need to address basic skills in a systematic way, with an attitude of positive expectations for all students. This is a particular concern at the building level of administration. Many districts now espouse a system-wide policy of basic skills commitment. But at the local level implementation slips. Programs are taught selectively to students who "can learn." "Difficult" students are shuffled off to special classes which often meet in basements or other dreary places — where is positive school climate? Supplies are provided to basic skills programs from "what is left," or after "more important" things are taken care of.

All-too-often, basic skills are "taught to the test," in a highly specialized, often dull and dreary way that sets the area apart from the "real," legitimate school program. These skills are not taught with the same verve, desire, and commitment as are other subjects.

If a single aspect most characterizes a strong emphasis on basic skills, as Edmonds, Brookover and other researchers have described it, it is not the need to teach a specific body of information or skills. Rather, the emphasis seems to be to define something as basic and essential to be taught. It might be mathematics and reading; it may be more broadly defined skills. It is the act of deciding what should be taught; of agreeing to teach it in such a way that it is reinforced throughout the

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entire school building, and to define it in such a way that it can be regularly monitored, that makes teaching basic skills a vital factor in effective schooling. Edmonds (1979) has pointed out, especially in teaching poor and minority children, that basic skills must be defined in the same way as it is for middle-class and white children. That is the effective schools challenge to the factor of basic skills.

## Practical Approaches for Dealing With Basic Skills

A quality basic skills program is well-coordinated with all involved persons in the school understanding the goals, objectives, and the implementation process. Included in the program is an effective mechanism for evaluating the achievement of basic skills objectives. These suggestions can be incorporated to improve basic skills programs:

- Students should develop a sense of personal responsibility for learning the basic skills. Student advisee groups for goal setting, decision making, values clarification, and career awareness give students more ownership and produce increased student accountability;
- Learning labs -- developed to provide special instruction based upon the results of the basic skills evaluation -- are excellent resources;
- Parent/student learning contracts can be used to gain commitments and support;
- Cooperative learning can be helpful for giving all students opportunities to achieve success in basic skills areas;

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- Games, drills, and tasks that are completed after school serve as excellent reinforcement for basic skills instruction; and
- Adequate supplies, films, and other audio-visual aids upgrade traditional approaches to teaching basic skills and improve the students' attitude toward mastering the concepts.

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## MONITORING FOR RESULTS

One factor which Edmonds (1978) and his colleagues identified as important to improving instructional effectiveness was "consistent and reliable" pupil progress monitoring for results, a factor which Weber (1971) had also found in the inner-city schools he studied. According to Edmonds (1978), the major focus of monitoring was "that some means must exist in the school by which the principal and the teachers remain constantly aware of pupil progress in relationship to instructional objectives."

As with many of the factors, Edmonds' (Edmonds & Frederiksen, 1979) survey of New York City schools had validated the monitoring factor as a significant aspect of improvement. Not only did 40 percent of the teachers in improving schools report that monitoring was "definitely" characteristic of their schools, but 90-100 percent of these teachers revealed satisfaction with making instructional use of achievement and diagnostic test results. In improving schools, it is the use of information on assessment in ways that influence teacher planning and instruction that is so critical to improvement practices. Similarly, in terms of basic skills improvement, it is the use of information on student achievement that is the heart of evaluation from the principal's point of view.

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There is, of course, a whole range of assessment techniques available to the school administration and faculty. These techniques range from immediate checking of student performance, accompanied by instant verbal feedback in the classroom, to once-a-year, standardized testing. There is also a great variety of "tests" or assessment instruments currently available to educators. The key question for the improvement of schooling is not "what test is to be used" in the assessment, but "what outcome are we monitoring?" Brookover (Brookover et al., 1980) has suggested that a better understanding of the outcomes desired will help clarify the kinds of measurement we need and the conditions under which we can best examine the students' performance. Brookover has also asserted that we are in a much better position to measure some "basic cognitive outcomes" than we are capable of assessing more behavioral characteristics. Continued work needs to be pursued on the development of such non-cognitive materials.

When discussing the school administrator's role in the monitoring process, Brookover (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979) has stressed that it is important for the principal to assume the responsibility for the evaluation process. This is a school-wide effort not just a testing procedure that occurs in an isolated classroom. He refers to school staffs who are involved in the school-wide monitoring process as "further along in the development of an accountability model." According to the Michigan

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researcher, this kind of acceptance is an aspect of improving staff's willingness to work together cooperatively. By contrast, personnel at declining schools, Brookover contended, "tend to reject the relevance of . . . tests and make little use of these assessment devices as a reflection of their instruction." To Brookover, cooperative behavior involved in monitoring activity is one of the keys to effectiveness in schooling. In a recent report, Brookover (1980) predicted: "We hypothesize that evaluation of the school as a unit or at least secondary school departments rather than individual teachers will enhance the unit's effectiveness."

There seems to be little empirical evidence available on what type of assessment or test is best for producing improving schools. But concerns for "consistent and reliable" assessment procedures may, according to the spirit of Edmonds, lead to a number of points that should be reviewed in planning school-wide monitoring programs.

First, it might be contended, most schools are designed to teach average, middle-class children. School leadership, teacher expectation, and progress assessment are keyed to that bias. Knowingly or unknowingly, poor and minority children are often "screened out" by the way in which this basic orientation functions. This is especially true of assessment, and teacher-made tests are likely to reflect this inherent, historical point of view. Therefore, special effort should be made to see that non-standardized assessment reflects the commitment to all students and

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to the positive expectations that are found in effective schools.

A second thing to remember is that different tests measure different things. Even tests that are thought to measure the same thing may, in actuality, measure different dimensions. A teacher-made test on basic skills, for example, may measure how much the students have learned of the curriculum taught within the context of a building-wide or system-wide program. A standardized test on basic skills, on the other hand, may measure how well the program itself is functioning in the building or system. The first use may obscure or enhance the second use, and vice versa. While those differences of purpose may seem minimal, they may in fact be very important and may, if they are not carefully attended, cause a great deal of difficulty for improving instructional effectiveness.

A third thing to remember is that assessment may be used for instructional purposes. As has been seen, such is often the case in improving schools. The same positive attitude may, and should be taken toward assessment as toward student potential. Test results should be interpreted in a supportive and cooperative atmosphere, competence in a wide range of assessment techniques should be promoted, and teachers and administrators alike should be encouraged to use test results as the basis for further and better defined teaching. Such feedback practices, by the way, are virtually the opposite of the "teaching-to-the-test" position.

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Perhaps nothing is more threatening and at the same time more vital to providing improved instruction than is regular assessment. Yet effective assessment also requires the trust, leadership, and confidence wrought by the other four factors of effective schooling. Without that basis, assessment may become the epitome of ineffective schooling -- more self-validation and selective attention.

## Practical Approaches for Establishing Effective Monitoring

A factor, critical to the effectiveness of monitoring, is clarification of the testing purpose. After the objectives are established, these ideas may provide additional assessment insight:

- Test information doesn't usually define specific problems. It indicates the area where problems exist and can be used to stimulate action. For example:

  > *In one school district, all elementary students scored low on listening skills. Principals were asked to discuss the problem with their teachers and to propose possible solutions. Investigations turned up deficiencies in the schools' curriculum which subsequently resulted in curricular changes.*

- Regular meetings provide for monitoring school progress throughout the year. Building-level plans can be developed by a team of school staff and other appropriate persons. This practice increases communication and knowledge about performance and outcomes and can establish a format for developing and maintaining consistent, reliable monitoring.

- Meetings or mini-conferences, specifically among professionals, about instructional concerns/issues will also provide additional input and broaden staff understanding.

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# Tools and Strategies

Successful in Japan and in American industry, quality circles involve staff members in solving organization problems.

# Quality Circles

LARRY CHASE

EDUCATION

niques and values to discover if it can be used to reduce the costs of education and improve the morale and productivity of teachers, administrators, and others involved with the school enterprise.

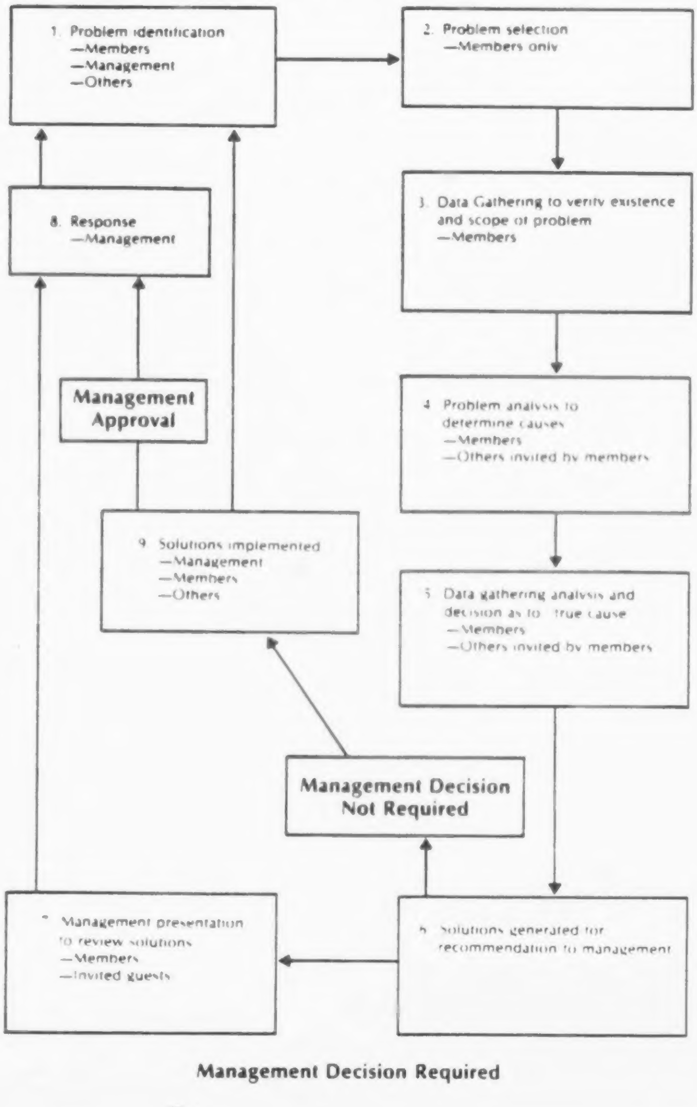
Whether or not the quality circle will have the kind of success in public school settings that it is producing in a large section of the American business establishment remains to be seen. That the technique is worth investigation and study is beyond question.

### How Quality Circles Function

A quality circle is a small group of employees (5–12) who voluntarily meet on a regular basis to identify, analyze, and solve various problems. Ideally, members of each circle should be from the same work area, do similar work, or interact closely to get a particular job done so that the problems they select will be familiar and important to all of them. There is no limit to the number of circles that can be created within an organization. Typically, circles meet for an hour a week, but this may be changed based on local circumstances. Once trained, circle members go through specific steps to accomplish the goal of the circle. Figure 1 reflects this process.

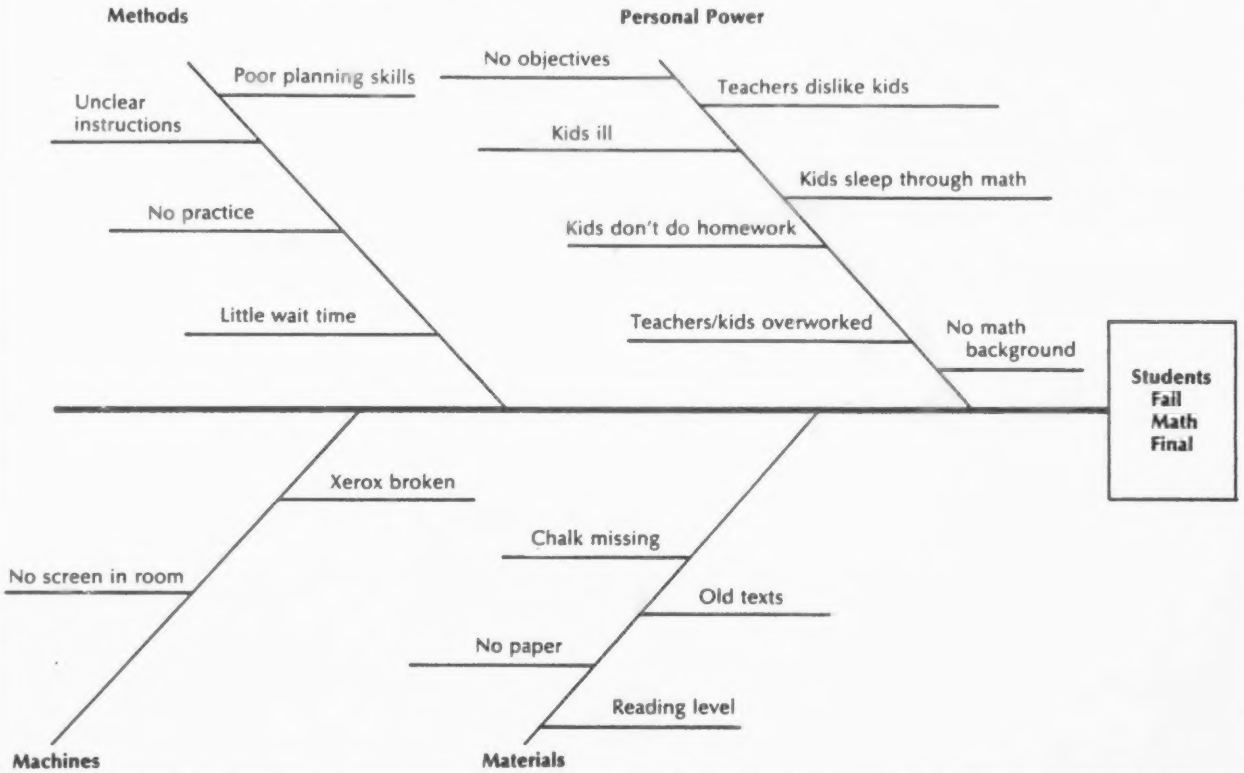
In conducting quality circle workshops for school administrators, I'm sometimes confronted with skepticism that the concept is really anything new or better than the participative management processes that schools are currently using. For instance: some administrators say, "Perhaps this technique has some value on the assembly line where managers have never asked anybody's opinion before, but I often involve my staff in planning and decision making."

Figure 1. How a Quality Circle Operates.



1. Problem identification
—Members
—Management
—Others
2. Problem selection
—Members only
3. Data Gathering to verify existence and scope of problem
—Members
4. Problem analysis to determine causes
—Members
—Others invited by members
5. Data gathering analysis and decision as to "true cause"
—Members
—Others invited by members
6. Solutions generated for recommendation to management
7. Management presentation to review solutions
—Members
—Invited guests
8. Response
—Management
9. Solutions implemented
—Management
—Members
—Others
Management Approval
Management Decision Not Required
Management Decision Required

Figure 2. Fishbone Diagram.



My response to this legitimate defense is to challenge the skeptic to understand the integrity of the quality circle tool and to consider the effects of the disciplined, almost ritualistic, principles that make it a quality circle. Regardless of what a school administrator calls the process, if it is consistent with all of those principles it will function like a quality circle.

## Quality Circle Techniques

Quality circles are *very* different from the task forces and committees typically used in education. Quality circle leaders and members are trained in the specific language and procedures of the circle process. These techniques are used at each step of the quality circle process to achieve the results of that step. There are eight separate techniques.

1. *Round Robin Brainstorming.* Most educators are familiar with brainstorming. When managed properly, a brainstorming session produces the maximum number of alternative ideas on a given topic. It increases the originality as well as the quality of ideas. The rules for brainstorming are very specific and are designed to eliminate ego involvement and negative feelings that might interfere with the generation of many ideas. Brainstorming allows participants to break out of their normal conceptual limits to think of possibilities they would not normally consider. The round robin structure also guarantees increased participation of all of the members in the group rather than domination by a few individuals.

The purpose of the brainstorming session, which is used in every step of problem solving, is to produce a large quantity of ideas before narrowing to the best ideas.

2. *Voting to Achieve Group Consensus.* Educators know the value of achieving consensus, and they know it is a time-consuming process, which is why it's rarely used in schools. The circle voting technique to achieve consensus is an efficient procedure that works well in any consensus-seeking situation, not only in quality circles.

There are two levels of voting in this process. During the first vote, circle members raise their hands to indicate which ideas generated in the brainstorming session warrant further consideration. Individuals are allowed to vote for as many ideas as they wish. The number of votes for each idea are tallied and those ideas receiving no votes are eliminated from further consideration. The remaining ideas are reorganized according to priority; those getting the most votes are ranked highest.

Next, group members discuss the ideas to clarify their interpretation of them. Individuals who feel strongly about the importance of promoting one particular idea are given an opportunity to convince other members of its worth. The group is reminded that the consensus model requires the participation of all members equally rather than allowing a few verbal or articulate people to dominate the decision process. When this discussion phase is completed, the group votes again. During this step the number of times an individual can vote is limited by the number of ideas. Typically, if five ideas remain, each member gets one vote. If ten ideas remain, each member gets two votes. This process forces group members to choose from among alternatives to determine which ideas have maximum support. Through this process the ideas are reordered and the ones at the top of the list are now accepted for further consideration. Other ideas are kept for later consideration. Typically, brainstorming and voting are used at steps 2, 4, and 6 of the problem-solving process.

3. *Cause and Effect Analysis.* There

are many cause-and-effect analysis systems. Each system provides a rational structure through which data are manipulated to determine the "true" cause of a particular problem. The method most often used in quality control circles is the fishbone technique. Circle members fill in a fishbone diagram, beginning with a statement of the problem—the effect—in a box on the right side of the diagram. Possible causes of the problem usually fall into one of four categories: methods, machines, materials, and people power. As group members think of what might have caused the problem, their ideas are added to the diagram in the appropriate categories. The fishbone diagram in Figure 2 gives a sense of the way data are organized by this structure.

Other cause-and-effect formats include work flow analysis, force field analysis, process cause-and-effect analysis, job target analysis, and so forth. Before a cause-and-effect analysis tool is adopted by a circle, group members must be thoroughly trained in the exact application of the model.

4. *Data Collection*. In certain stages of the quality circle process data collection and verification become very important. At these times circle members call on any and all data gathering tools and techniques that can serve the purpose at hand. Which tools and techniques are chosen depend on the data that are needed to analyze a particular problem. Typically data gathering involves the use of check sheets, checklists, surveys, sampling techniques, graphs, and simple statistical techniques like mean, median range, frequency distribution, inferential data analysis, and so on.

## Examples of Check Sheets

### Case 1

**A. Problem Identified:** Teachers feel threatened by clinical supervision program.

**B. Major Causes Analyzed:**

1. Teachers fear supervision is really evaluation.
2. Teachers don't understand the new teaching methods.
3. Principals lack communication skills.
4. Conference time is insufficient.
5. Inservice program lacks practice time.
6. Other.

| | Elem. Bldg.1 | Elem. Bldg.2 | Elem. Bldg.3 | Jr. Hi. Bldg. | Hi. Sch. Bldg. | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Principal's supervision is evaluation | xxxx<br>xxx | xxxx<br>xx | xxxx<br>x | xxxxx<br>xxx | xxxxxx<br>xxxxxx | 38 |
| 2. Don't understand methods | x | xx | | xxx | xxxx | 10 |
| 3. Principals lack communication skills | xx | x | x | xxx | xxxxx | 12 |
| 4. Conference time is insufficient | | xx | | | x | 3 |
| 5. Inservice program lacks practice time | x | | x | xx | x | 5 |
| 6. Other | x | xx | x | x | | 5 |

### Case 2

**A. Problem Identified:** Student reading levels deteriorated in 8th grade.

**B. Major Causes Analyzed:**

1. Entry skills are lower with more transient population.
2. Less time spent on reading skills in content area.
3. Lack on coordination among staff on remedial methods.
4. Teacher expectations are lower.

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Lower entry skills | xx | x | | xx | 5 |
| 2. Less time spent on reading skills | xxxx<br>xx | xxx<br>x | xxx<br>x | xxx<br>xxx | 20 |
| 3. Lack of coordination | x | | | x | 2 |
| 4. Lower teacher expectations | xx | x | xxx | x | 7 |

While most educators have taken a course in statistics as part of their graduate preparation, few are truly trained at the routine application of statistical analysis techniques within their own jobs. One of the spin-off benefits of quality circle involvement is the opportunity to relearn useful statistical analysis, data analysis, and data gathering methods at a practical level.

5. *Decision Analysis*. Cause-and-effect analysis provides the data necessary to determine the most likely causes of a problem and the direction for data gathering and verification. Decision analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing the results of data gathering and verification in order to determine if the hypothetical culprit or cause is the *actual* cause before solutions are considered. The decision analysis method used most often by quality circles is the Pareto Decision Analysis Technique, often referred to as the 80-20 method.

The Pareto method—named after the Italian economist and sociologist who created it—assumes that certain variables in any situation determine 80 percent of the results or nonresults, while all other variables combined account for only 20 percent of the results or nonresults. In time management workshops, this is often illustrated with the example that typical school administrators accomplish 80+ percent of their results in 20 percent of their time at work, while spending 80 percent of their time on activities that rarely produce significant results. Good time management realigns time spent with activities that will produce results. The Pareto chart is a bar graph arranged in such a way that the most likely cause of a problem appears significantly larger than all other possible causes. It can be an emotional moment in the quality circle process when the Pareto chart is finally completed and displayed for all to see. It is as if we had been on a hunting expedition for the one variable that is most important to alter. The Pareto chart visually verifies if the suspected culprit is the one in fact.

The following example illustrates the use of the Pareto decision analysis technique. A quality circle composed of intermediate grade teachers had identified the need to increase students' engaged learning time as the problem to be solved. During the data analysis process, they created a check sheet to identify various categories of interruptions of the learning process during prime morning

**Figure 3. Barriers to Student Engaged Time.**

| | Mon. 9–11:45 | Tues. 9–11:45 | Wed. 9–11:45 | Thurs. 9–11:45 | Fri. 9–11:45 | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P.A. System | /// | /// | //// | // | 𝍸 / | 18 |
| Learning activity transitions | 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 /// | 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 //// | 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 /// | 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 /// | 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 /// | 112 |
| Classroom management interaction | 𝍸 / | 𝍸 𝍸 / | 𝍸 // | 𝍸 //// | //// | 37 |
| Giving directions | //// | /// | 𝍸 /// | 𝍸 //// | 𝍸 / | 30 |
| Nonproductive student behavior | 𝍸 𝍸 | 𝍸 /// | 𝍸 𝍸 | 𝍸 𝍸 // | 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 / | 56 |
| One tally mark equals one minute of nonengagement | | | | | | |

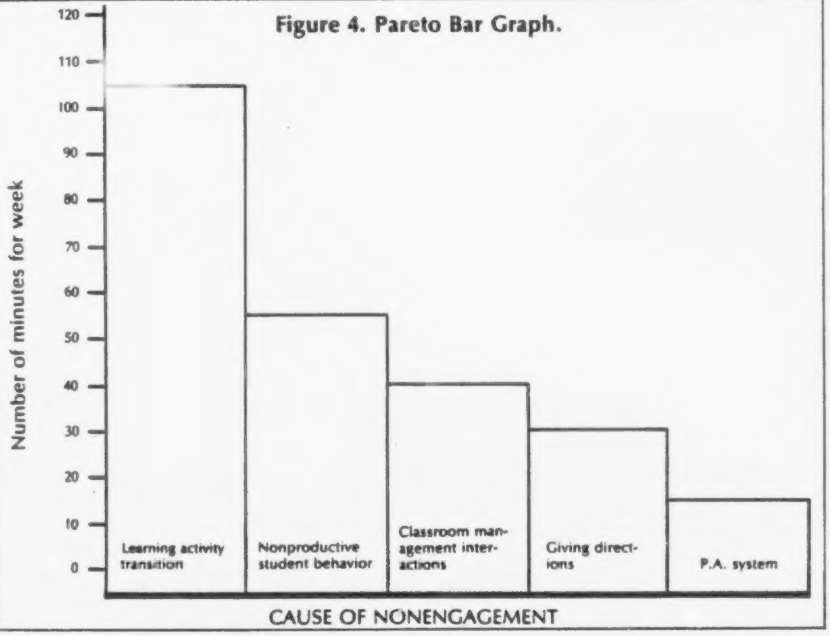


**Figure 4. Pareto Bar Graph.**

hours. After tabulating the number of minutes that students were off-task because of each category of interruption (shown in Figure 3), the data were arranged using the Pareto bar graph (Figure 4). This visual presentation of the data clearly showed that one type of interruption, "learning activity transitions," was by far the most significant barrier to increasing student academic learning time. From this analysis, circle members decided to generate solutions that would significantly reduce the loss of engaged time due to learning activity transitions.

6. *Generating Solutions.* All the quality circle procedures discussed so far are appropriate to use at the solution generation stage. In addition, a cost/benefit analysis is performed at this time. Cost/benefit analysis is a decision-making tool that helps the quality circle systematically determine cost and benefits of each proposed solution as well as the likely effect of each alternative. Through this process, a specific list of recommendations and an implementation plan emerge, which the group will present to managers of the organization.

7. *Management Presentation.* The purpose of the management presentation is to formally present the findings of the quality circle to the individual responsible for rejecting or accepting recommendations. Guests may also be invited. Much care goes into planning this presentation to ensure that the group gets the most leverage possible out of it. The tone of the presentation is usually formal. The presenter acknowledges anyone who helped the circle achieve its result and circle members themselves are acknowledged by management for their efforts in tackling the problem. Figure 5 is an example of a checklist one quality circle used to ensure a smooth management presentation.

**Figure 5. Sample Checklist for Management Presentations.**

10 Essential Points

1. Make Positive Statements
2. Use the Personal Viewpoint
3. Have a Leader
4. Use an Appropriate Meeting Area
5. Follow an Agenda
6. Follow the Chain of Command
7. Have a Theme
8. Keep It Short and Simple
9. Use Instructional Aids
10. Cover All Achievement, Progress, and Accomplishments

8. *Evaluation.* Like any self-renewing organizational process, the management presentation is followed by self-evaluation so that circle members can critique the way they functioned during the previous weeks or months. Upon completion of this phase the process begins again, with the group using problem identification techniques to determine what they'll tackle next.

These procedural steps are followed ritualistically, which ensures disciplined guidance for members during each step of the process. Time is used efficiently and groups are often surprised at how much they're able to accomplish in a short time compared to other forms of participative problem solving or decision making.

### Examples of School Problems Appropriate for Quality Circle Processes

A broad range of problem areas could be addressed by a quality circle. Remember that while any member of the organization can suggest a problem to a quality circle group for consideration, the circle itself, through its normal process, determines what problems will be analyzed and solved. Administrators may not approve of the choices of a particular circle. Circle members may perceive that a problem affecting them in a minor but nagging way on a daily basis is more important than a problem critical to the school district as a whole, especially in the beginning. Often, such decisions are made by circle groups to test the administrators' integrity and commitment. The group seeks assurance that it will be allowed to make its own decisions.

It is fundamentally important that groups be supportive in these decisions. A danger in the area of problem selection arises when administrators encourage circles to select only problems important to administrators. While those problems with the potential to save money for the organization *are* important to solve, solving problems that interfere with job satisfaction, employee morale, and general working conditions may be more important in the long run. Quality circles are a long-term change effort to increase the quality and productivity of the organization. They are not a quick fix nor a substitute for hiring effective managers, negotiating carefully with bargaining units, or supervising staff appropriately.

## Typical Problems for Quality Circle Consideration

### Teachers

- Improving student discipline
- Improving the use of materials, audiovisual equipment, or other school resources
- Scheduling of school activities that interfere with the learning process
- Increasing time on task with students
- Teaching certain difficult-to-teach students
- Relative amount of emphasis of different curricular areas
- Expectations regarding student performance
- Appropriate use of tests and other student evaluation methods
- Teaching skills and the need for staff development to upgrade teaching skills
- School community relationships
- Parent/teacher conferences
- Assemblies
- Articulation between grade levels, between elementary and junior high, between junior high and high school
- Orienting new teachers
- Coordinating regular teachers and substitute teachers
- Establishing schoolwide norms and rules for student behaviors
- Reducing accidents in gym
- Reducing stress
- Increasing job satisfaction
- Managing student records
- Reducing employee and student absenteeism
- Handling school closing or staff consolidation
- Improving supervisory practices
- Reducing vandalism
- Curtailing waste
- Increasing affiliation among staff
- Meeting special needs of students

### School Principals

- Finding more time to conduct instructional improvement activities
- Reducing paperwork flow
- Motivating teaching staff
- Improving communication vertically between the school and central office
- Reducing stress and pressure
- Time management problems of being a principal
- Improving delegation to school secretaries and other support staff at the school level to get more done
- Handling communication with parents and other citizens at the school level
- Managing committees, task groups, and other decision-making activities of teachers and other staff
- Scheduling problems
- Managing time to include all necessary staffings for various purposes
- Maintaining a school climate appropriate for learning
- Ensuring the teaching staff continue to update their skills
- Developing and maintaining high expectations of teaching staff about student learning disabilities

### Library Aides

- Books coming back damaged
- Books that are overused by teachers and students and aren't there when needed
- Patterns of student traffic in the libraries and learning centers to avoid confusion
- Discipline problems in the library
- Library organization
- Scheduling problems with various classes using the library
- Student management skills of library aides who aren't trained as teachers

### Central Office Secretarial Staff

- Managing telephone calls to the district and among the schools
- Improving communication among all the schools and the central office
- Managing personnel data appropriately
- Duplication and information processing problems
- Keeping track of district capital equipment for inventory purposes
- Handling irate citizens in a positive manner
- Assisting school secretaries in handling excess work load
- Improving job satisfaction and reducing stress
- Considering more efficient technological methods for managing various forms of district data

### Custodians

- Graffiti on lockers and bathroom walls
- More efficient ways to clean a building in less time
- Overload on demand to use cleaning equipment throughout the district
- Safety problems regarding cleaning and maintenance equipment
- Monitoring major heating and maintenance functions to save costs; energy saving programs
- Developing long-range plans for scheduling building maintenance
- Handling interpersonal conflicts within the custodial staff and between custodians and teachers
- Dealing with communication problems of limited-English proficient custodians in an English-speaking school.

### Bus Drivers

- Student discipline on the buses
- Defensive driving techniques during winter months
- Orienting and training new drivers.

### Food Service Workers

- Reducing student waste of school food
- Improving the appearance and quality of food to compete with fast food alternatives
- Interpersonal problems between food service workers and students
- Managing the time problems associated with serving lunches to a large school population
- Keeping the lunchroom clean
- Handling special food orders for medical problems, special clubs, and the like
- Maintaining and reducing costs associated with food service equipment

- Creating and maintaining a positive environment for eating.

## Implementation: The Politics of Quality Circles

The politics of quality circles are no different from the politics of any innovation. Those of us who have participated in educational improvement programs in public schools during the past ten years have learned that unless innovators give careful attention to "political" factors, any innovation, no matter how well thought out, will fail to be adopted. Successful implementation, therefore, includes a systematic plan for addressing these issues.

Following is a step-by-step plan for implementing quality circles to ensure proper involvement of the appropriate power groups. While modifications in these steps can be made, the administrator wishing to implement successfully should not deviate far from the basic structure.

1. *Obtaining top administration support for the program*. A commitment to quality circles must be perceived as a long-range attempt to enroll more brain power and employee creativity in solving critical organizational problems. In private settings, it is generally accepted that it will take 18 months before the initial financial investment in the quality circle is recovered. This implies the need to invest organizational resources, primarily staff time and some financial resources, to set up, train, and supply quality circle leaders and participants.

No matter how positive your organization is, there will always be foot draggers, nay sayers, and negative thinkers. No process of essential human change can predict in advance all the intricacies and dynamics that will emerge as the process moves along. We know problems will be encountered and mistakes will be made.

For all these reasons, active commitment and support from the top administrator and the board is essential. While it is not necessary that the top administrator participate directly as a quality circle member, the idea makes good sense. For example, the Illinois State Board of Education expressed its commitment by installing quality circles in its 900-employee bureaucracy, and created a pilot circle among the superintendent's cabinet. The circle leader for this group is the state superintendent of education and circle members include the deputy and assistant superintendents for the various administrative departments.

2. *Establishing a steering committee*. The steering committee is responsible for monitoring the installation and evaluation of the quality circle program. It is composed of representatives from various organizational power groups. The steering committee:

a. Establishes policy for the initiation and operation of quality circles within the organization

b. Plans implementation

c. Selects a facilitator to supervise the implementation

d. Monitors progress of the circle program and recommends changes to keep it on target

e. Suggests ways to improve and expand the quality circle program

f. Periodically informs top management and other employees of results being achieved.

In a school environment, the steering committee should include minimally the following representatives: (1) the superintendent or the superintendent's designee who clearly represents the superintendent's authority on the steering committee; (2) a representative of the principals' organization; (3) a high level representative from the teachers' collective bargaining unit; (4) the business manager or other business-oriented official; and (5) representatives of support staff groups including custodial/maintenance personnel, school secretaries, and food service employees. Any other groups in the organization to be considered as areas for pilot circles should be represented on the steering committee. Other representatives could include community participants, board members, students, or individuals with specific technical abilities that may be useful to the success of the circle program.

While the steering committee need not devote a lot of time to meeting as a steering committee, certain key responsibilities must be handled by this group. The most important of these is the identification of a facilitator.

3. *Appointing the quality circle facilitator*. The facilitator is the key individual who is the most knowledgeable and resourceful regarding the quality circle concept. The facilitator:

1. Sets up a circle system within the organization
    - a. Sits as an active member of the steering committee
    - b. Serves as quality circle program coordinator
    - c. Trains members, leaders, and management as appropriate
2. Maintains circles on a regular basis
    - a. Coordinates different circles
    - b. Maintains circle records
    - c. Arranges meetings with outsiders to visit circles
    - d. Attends circle meetings
    - e. Searches for new members
    - f. Encourages idea sharing among circle members about circles
    - g. Publicizes the circle program to all employees
    - h. Is an advocate within and outside the organization for the quality circle concept
    - i. Does background detail work to make sure circle groups have resources needed and to make sure management presentations are handled appropriately
    - j. Prepares training materials and develops orientation and training program as the circle concept expands
    - k. Maintains records of all circle activities and gives periodic reports to the steering committee on circle results

Whether or not to hire the facilitator on a full-time basis is an important and difficult decision. It is not mandatory that the facilitator be assigned full-time to quality circle activities. On the other hand, the position should not simply be added to the job description of a central office administrator, principal, or department chairperson who already has many responsibilities. While it is difficult to estimate the amount of time needed by the facilitator to adequately manage the quality circle program, some companies have found that a full-time facilitator is required if six or more circles are established during the pilot year.

4. *The management presentation*. The management presentation provides the appropriate celebration for the completed ritual of the quality circle process. It is a powerful opportunity for accomplishing goals. Most important, it is the management presentation where the quality circle members present their recommendations and supporting data in a convincing fashion to their assigned supervisor. In a school setting, this may be a building principal, a central office administrator, or the superintendent. The individual receiving the management presentation must be open and willing to go along with the recommen-

dations of the circle. This is not to say that the circle process requires that every proposed recommendation be implemented. In industry, an average of 95 percent of circle recommendations are implemented. It is important, however, that the administrator make a decision following the management presentation and communicate it as quickly as possible to the circle members. If the decision is not to implement the circle's recommendations, clear and concise reasons should be given. The supervisor needs to interact with the circle group for as long as necessary until they understand and accept the reasons for the rejection. If the quality circle process has proceeded appropriately, all-out rejection of a recommendation is very unlikely. One of the key responsibilities of the facilitator throughout the process is to inform the individual who will ultimately make the decision of the direction being taken by the quality circle so that the management presentation does not come as a negative surprise.

5. *Evaluating the effectiveness of the quality circle program*. Establishing criteria for evaluating and monitoring the effectiveness of the program is one of the responsibilities of the steering committee. At the beginning of the pilot process, criteria on which the program will be evaluated are articulated and shared widely in the organization. These criteria often include not only actual cost savings to the organization but participant perceptions of the worth of the project and benefits to morale, job satisfaction, and work climate. Whether these measures are based on standardized devices or subjective report is less important than the fact that they are clearly established at the beginning of the process.

6. *Quality circle expansion*. The built-in training process of the quality circle program makes its eventual expansion to more groups natural and inevitable. Typically, about six months into the program the facilitator and group leaders in the pilot circles will identify a circle member in each group with the capability and willingness to become a new circle leader. These individuals can be given extra training and allowed to set up new circles as the demand for participation increases. You know the program is developing properly if there are always some individuals not participating in circles who are pressing for the opportunity.

Quality circles, like any innovation, must eventually become integrated into the ethos of the local organization. If implementation is going well, the integrity and ritual aspects of the circle, which are its power, will be maintained even as the circle process takes on the characteristics of the specific organization.

### What Circles Don't Deal With

Quality circles are not an alternative management system to the system existing in an organization. They are a management tool designed to increase the leverage of the organization at solving problems efficiently. The decision to establish a quality circle program is a management decision, even though participation in quality circles must be voluntary. Since we are human, certain areas must be identified up front as off limits for circle problem solving. Any problems that relate to the collective bargaining agreement that exists between the various employee associations and the board are to be handled within the structures delineated in the agreement, not in the quality circle. Any issues that relate to the legitimate prerogatives of management, such as hiring and firing employees, assigning employees, and establishing policy are not the prerogative of the quality circle. Any issues that focus on individual personality problems or characteristics of individual employees are off limits as well. Other locally determined, sensitive issues unique to an organization may also be identified in the beginning as off limits. This need not inhibit circle development or threaten the integrity of the circle process. It is important that these areas are articulated in the beginning, and that the facilitator and group leader ensure that groups comply with these rules of conduct.

### The Quality Circle Is Not a Con

I make this assertion because many administrators have implemented what I call pseudo-participation programs in which the hidden agenda was to manipulate staff into feeling involved in the decision-making/problem-solving processes of the organization when, in fact, the leader was not sincere. The sincere commitment of the top administration will be tested early in the quality circle program. For instance, a quality circle may request sensitive and closely guarded information only available to a few administrators, but which is needed for problem analysis. The willingness of the administration to share openly any and all information that is requested within legal and ethical limits is a critical test of the whole system.

Some managers fear empowering their employees. They believe that if their employees understand their power, they will lose control, look bad, or be fired. Research, however, clearly shows this is not true. In any hierarchical organization, the results achieved by employees are recorded against the account of the manager in charge. The more responsibility employees are willing to take, the more participation they have in problem solving, the more energy they devote to improving the organization, the better it will be for the manager in the eyes of those higher up. Yet, make no mistake. It is scary to give up power to employees knowing that you will be hard pressed to go against their recommendations. Few things worth doing are without their risks.

There is no way to know whether or not quality circles will work in a particular public school setting. That the concept is working in a variety of organizations is well documented. Final responsibility for examining this particular tool rests with the individual school administrator who may have a lot to gain or a lot to lose by considering quality circles.

As a final note, I'm reminded of one of the more positive contributions of the former Director of the Office of Management and Budget, Bert Lance, who said, "If it's not broke, don't fix it." So if your school's not "broke," you may see no purpose in investing the resources necessary to implement quality circles. On the other hand, if it's "broke." . . . ☐

## Resources for Information on Quality Circles

### Training Sources

Northwest Educational Cooperative
500 S. Dwyer
Arlington Heights, Ill. 60004
(312) 870-4100
Contact person: Lawrence G. Chase, Executive Director

Educational Improvement Center, N.E.
2 Babcock Place
West Orange, N.J. 07052
(201) 731-8400
Contact person: James Lewis, Executive Director

## Material Resources: Training Materials

Quality Circle Institute
1425 Vista Way
Airport Industrial Park
P.O. Box Q
Red Bluff, Calif. 96080
(916) 527-6970
Contact person: Donald Dewar, President

International Association of Quality Circles
P.O. Box 30635
Midwest City, Okla. 73140
(405) 737-6450
Contact person: Robert D. Collier, Executive Director

*Monographs on Implementing Quality Circles in Educational Settings*
San Mateo County Office of Education
333 Main Street
Redwood City, Calif. 94063
(415) 363-5400

*Quality Circle Training Materials for Educational Applications*
Educational Improvement Center, N.E.
2 Babcock Place
West Orange, N.J. 07052
(201) 731-8400
Contact person: James Lewis, Executive Director

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*Leadership and Motivation*.
Boston: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1966.

Ouchi, William G.
*Theory Z: How American Business Can Meet the Japanese Challenge*.
New York: Avon Books, 1981.

The following materials may be ordered from the IAQC Executive Office, P.O. Box 30635, Midwest City, Okla. 73140, (405) 737-6450.

*Quality Circles* by Donald Dewar and Jefferson F. Beardsley. Describes training, implementation, and operation of quality circles, 1977 (186 pages).

*1979 Transactions*. The transcripts of papers presented at the First Annual Conference of the International Association of Quality Circles (119 pages).

*1980 Transactions*. The transcripts of papers presented at the Second Annual Conference of the International Association of Quality Circles (119 pages).

*1981 Transactions*. The transactions of workshops presented at the Third Annual Conference of the International Association of Quality Circles (191 pages).

*1982 Transactions*. The transcripts of workshops and presentations made at the Fourth Annual Conference of the International Association of Quality Circles (564 pages).

*Introduction to Quality Circles*. Audiovisual slide and cassette presentation consists of 80 slides and cassette tape.

*Quality Circle Leader Manual* by Donald Dewar (250 pages).

*Quality Circle Member Manual* by Donald Dewar (160 pages).

*Basic Quality Circle Techniques*. Eight audiovisual modules by Donald Dewar.

*Quality Circles: Answers to 100 Frequently Asked Questions* by Donald Dewar, 1979 (48 pages).

*Audio-Visuals (Set of 3 Advanced Training Techniques)* by Donald Dewar: (1) Histograms, (2) X R Control Charts, (3) Np Control Charts.

*Hewlett-Packard Video Tape*. Videotape on quality circles in action at Hewlett-Packard.

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SOURCE: How To Make Meetings Work

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New York, New York, 1976

# CHAPTER 6

# *How to Be a Good Facilitator*

Learning to become a facilitator is like learning to play a game or a sport. You can learn the rules quickly and begin to play. But to become a good player takes considerable practice. You must know something about the theory of the game and about strategies for dealing with different situations as they come up. But most of all, you must develop your skills by using them.

Some people like to start on a new project by getting an overview to understand why something works, why it is necesary. Earlier chapters, especially Chapter 2, answer the "why." (It is very important to understand why a facilitator can do a lot for a meeting and why the role works. It also makes your life easier: If you really understand the theory, you can invent your own techniques.)

Other people like to jump in and try to learn by experience. They just want to be given a few rules and techniques and shove off on their own. We encourage this, too. If everyone knows what a facilitator can and cannot do, your group can help you to learn. Here are some do's, don't's, and specifics on:

1. how to get a group to focus on a common problem and a common process;
2. how to protect group members and ensure that everyone participates; and
3. how to remain neutral and build trust.

Since the role of facilitator is based on flexibility and accommodation to the needs of the group members, it would be hypocritical and impossible to lay out a step-by-step procedure comparable to Robert's *Rules of Order.* Unlike the chairperson who can waltz to the regulated music of Robert's *Rules of Order,* the facilitator has to do a combination tap dance, shuffle, and tango to a syncopated rhythm produced by unpredictable humans.

There is no "right" way to facilitate. Much depends on your personality, the situation, and the nature of the people in your group. You must pick the techniques that seem most appropriate at the time. Remember, your group is a reservoir of knowledge and creativity. With the techniques detailed here, you can tap this resource. Then you and your group can solve almost any problem you face.

## HOW TO EXPLAIN THE FACILITATOR'S FUNCTION

It is very important that everyone in the meeting understand exactly what your function is. The first time you facilitate a group, your explanation may help to lower the anxiety for some members. By explicitly defining roles and responsibilities, you create a social contract with your group. You agree to try to remain neutral and not to evaluate or contribute your own ideas, and the members agree to share the responsibility of keeping you in your role.

So here's what you might say as a facilitator when all participants are present:

"Hello, my name is ____________, and I'm going to be your facilitator today. Just so that we're all clear, being a facilitator means that I am not going to contribute my own ideas or evaluate yours. My role is to help you focus your energies on the task. I am going to try very hard to remain completely neutral and to defend you from personal attack if necessary. I'll make some suggestions, but only about the process of the meeting—ways to proceed, not matters of substance. I'm your servant and this is your meeting. Being a good facilitator is difficult, so please help me. If you think I'm pushing too hard or manipulating you in any way, please let me know. If you correct me, I'll try not to be defensive. With your help, I'm sure we'll have a good meeting and get a lot done today." (For variations of this introduction, see Chapter 3.)

Then you should make sure that all other roles are clear to the group. The recorder should explain his or her role and the function of the group memory, and you should let the group members know what their responsibilities are. The role of manager or chairperson should also be clearly defined. And, if there are other roles to be played (especially those of observer and expert, which we cover at the end of this chapter), you should define these. When everyone knows the ground rules, you are ready to begin the meeting. (These introductions can be abreviated after you have facilitated the same group a few times.)

## HOW TO FOCUS ON THE SAME PROBLEM IN THE SAME WAY AT THE SAME TIME

The facilitator frees group members to focus on their common task. By assuming the responsibility for guiding the group, you offer people a better opportunity to achieve what is called synergy: when the group itself becomes more than the sum of individual members. This potential for a high level of creativity and accomplishment usually lies dormant. It is a large part of your job to try to awaken the sleeping synergy, like an orchestra conductor who gets each musician to play so as to create a sound that no single musician could ever produce.

You'll remember our discussing the multi-headed animal syndrome—the tendency for people in meetings to go off in different directions at the same time. We concluded that in an effective meeting a group must be of one mind, focused on the same problem in the same way at the same time.

The more group members understand the dynamics of meetings, the better they will function together. You may have to start by explaining the difference between content (what the people want to do) and process (how they are going to do it). You have to tell your people to hold their horses until they have agreed on:

1. The first agenda item (the content).
2. The way they are going to deal with it (the process). This second step is rarely taken in meetings. It means that you have to "rein in" your group and not let it go at the problem until the new procedure is understood.

## HOW TO BUILD AN AGENDA

Suppose you face a group which doesn't have an agenda and has never been in a meeting run by the Interaction Method. Here is how you might get the group working.

*Facilitator:* Are there any more questions about why we're here and how the meeting is going to be run? *(No more questions.)* Okay, let's get going. Let's get a list of possible agenda items, and then choose one as a start. Why don't you toss out things that you think need to be done today, and the recorder will get your thoughts down on the group memory. Don't worry which items are most important, and don't evaluate each other's suggestions. Just make sure that your own agenda items get included. Okay, let's go. Who's got an item? *(The group generates a list of issues.)*

*Facilitator:* Okay, any more items? Remember, we can keep adding to the list as we go along. *(Someone suggests one more item.)* Okay, let's stop here. *(Looks at the group memory.)* Looks like we have a lot of work to do. *(Laughter.)* Obviously, we aren't going to be able to solve all these problems at this meeting. So, we've got to choose a place to begin. Who can think of an item that's really pressing, that we need to take care of first. *(Three people suggest three different items, which the recorder stars on the list.)* Okay, we have three pressing issues. Is there a logical sequence to them? *(Someone suggests an order; several heads nod in agreement.)* We should be able to cover all three items today, so if it's all right with everyone, let's begin with number three, then number five, and then number two. *(No objections are voiced.)* So, now we're going to tackle item three. But before you rush off in different directions, let's agree on how we're going to discuss this issue. There is no one right way to solve this problem. We will have to poke at it from one direction, see how it goes, and then come back from a different direction, just like a boxer. Let's see if we can agree on the first punch. Any suggestions?

*Frank:* Let's get José to give us a rundown on what he's been doing so far.

*Facilitator:* Any other process suggestions?

*Maria:* We could all say what we think should be done.

*Paul:* I think the answer to this problem is simply—

*Facilitator:* Wait a minute, Paul, hold your horses! You'll have a chance to give us your solution later. You're trying to solve the problem before the rest of us have decided how we're going to begin. That's what I was talking about before. It may be frustrating at the start, but if we're going to work together we've got to use the same tools at the same time. We've got to agree on the "how." So, Paul, please hold your idea for a moment. Do you have a process suggestion, a way of attacking this problem?

*Paul:* Well . . . I agree with Maria; we could go around the room and give our solutions.

*Facilitator:* Good. Any other thoughts?

*Elizabeth:* Let's see if we can get to understand the problem better.

*Facilitator:* Any ideas about how, Elizabeth?

*Elizabeth:* Well, see if we can figure out why it's happening. *(Heads nod.)*

*Facilitator:* How about this as a way of getting going? Why don't we begin by asking José to give us a short analysis of the problem, since he's been closest to it. Then, as a group, let's continue to analyze the problem by building on José's presentation and come up with a list of possible causes of the problem. We'll see if we can agree on some of the most probable factors and then try to think up ways of taking care of them. If this approach doesn't work, we'll try attacking the problem head on as Maria suggested. Is everybody willing to try this approach? *(Heads nod.)* Okay, José, why don't you give us about a five-minute overview of the problem and what you've been doing about it.

To start this way takes more time than just leaping in and having a free-for-all. But the payoffs are worth it.

Many meetings don't start from such a rudimentary base. Perhaps an agenda has been prepared and some participants have had previous experience with the Interaction Method. Then the group could begin right away with the first item and would only have to agree on the methodology. Sometimes a tentative "process agenda" can be developed.

## WHO "OWNS" THE AGENDA?

Particularly in meetings of task forces and community groups the first part of the meeting has to be devoted to shaping the agenda so the group will feel it "owns" a common list. If you, as facilitator, make up an agenda and start the meeting by telling the participants what they are going to do, some people are likely to object and start challenging your right to be so directing. A group will naturally resist having an agenda laid on it without an opportunity to add items of their own or to decide which items to deal with first. Agreeing on a working method is also critically important. After you have started to build trust with your group, you will get permission to be more directive about which approach to use.

Notice that at the very beginning of the above example, the facilitator had to suggest a method (process) just to build up a list of agenda items: he asked each member to toss out what he thought had to be done, without evaluating others' suggestions. Obviously the process of agreeing on a process could become ludicrous—an endless regression. You've got to begin someplace.

If one or two people want to disrupt the meeting entirely, they could refuse to agree to any process. Then, as facilitator, you might have to confront them directly: "It seems you don't want this group to get anything done; what's the matter? Are you concerned about something?" If it turns out that some participants are committed to a lose/lose strategy of disruption, then collaborative problem-solving is impossible. You should step down as facilitator and a win/lose procedure will have to be adopted.

## KEEP THE REINS LOOSE AT FIRST

When you facilitate a new group, it's a good rule to let the group begin by struggling with the decision of where it wants to begin and how. Give as few directions as possible, especially at first. Wait until people are convinced you are there to help them and that they need your help. Soon participants may start to complain that the meeting is moving too slowly and ask you to take more control. Then you can start being more emphatic, but still without stepping out of your role. You can give such directions as "I think we should stop and move on to the next alternative and make a list of the advantages and disadvantages. John, can you think of an advantage of this alternative?"

You can tell by your group's faces whether the members are with you or not. Their expressions will let you know if you are pushing too hard.

In the previous example, the facilitator got the group to generate a list of ways to tackle the first problem, while keeping Paul from leaping in. The final process suggestion from the facilitator was actually a combination of the two most popular suggestions. Later in the meeting, you, as facilitator, might be able to skip this and simply tell the group what you think should be the next process.

Keep on making sure that all group members are constantly clear about what's "what" and what's "how." If there is confusion, stop and clear it up. Underline the transition from one process to the next: "Okay, now we'll stop brainstorming and start evaluating." "We're now moving on to item three." "John, have you finished?" "Okay, now it's your turn."

All these little jumps are simple and unconscious for the mind of an individual, but infinitely more complex for a group of minds to grapple with. They need to be explicit and conscious.

## WHEN TO MOVE ON OR SLOW DOWN

Because you are not trying to solve a problem or make a decision yourself, you can diagnose more easily when your group is getting hung up or fixated—when it's time to try something else, to move on. As facilitator you must ask yourself and your group: Are we getting anywhere? Is it time to move on to a different topic or try a different point of view?

You are in a good place to make such process suggestions and decisions. You must try to slow the group down when it picks up too much speed, starts to bypass important issues, and makes hasty decisions. It's easy to flag the group down. Try saying, "Hey, we have plenty of time left! Let's make sure we're all together. You don't want to rush into something you may regret later."

When the energy of the group is getting low, when people lose interest or show signs of frustration because they are not getting anywhere, it's your job to become an energizer. You can pump up the group with your own energy. Move around the room. Show enthusiasm. You don't have to sound like a cheerleader, but you can say, "You've been doing well! Let's not get bogged down. We've just a little more to do. Let's really push. Maybe it's time to move on to the next point."

Sometimes you can get people to become aware of their sluggishness. Try "Hey, you all look dead this morning. What's going on?" Or try a little humor: "You all look as if you had too good a time last night." Laughter and smiles, along with honesty and acceptance, help tremendously. So does a physical change; get people to stand up and stretch. Open windows. Take a short break.

Be aware of the group's many possible moods. Stay in contact with their happiness or sadness, exhilaration or frustration, friendliness or hostility, peacefulness or anxiety. Empathize with your group and try to stay on the same wavelength.

## WHEN THE GROUP GETS STUCK

Here's how the facilitator can use a group memory to focus the attention of the group. When nothing cohesive emerges from a meeting, move up close to the group until you have everyone's attention. Then walk back to the proper place of the group memory, point, and say, "Okay, here's where we are. We just finished talking about criteria. Is there an eighth item, or can we move on and test what we've now got against the alternatives over there?"

The last line on the group memory becomes a marker to return to after a digression.

Remember, you're in a powerful position when you facilitate; you command the attention of the group. Don't abuse this power. You should become a lens through which the attention of the group becomes focused on the problem. You can help to sharpen and direct the attention of the group, but don't block it. Don't be seduced into basking in the limelight. Whenever possible, step aside and let the group move at its own speed. When the meeting is going well, you may only have to say something every few minutes. Some groups can go for long stretches facilitating themselves. You can sit down and wait until you are needed.

It's a great temptation to be a ham and get pumped up by the group. However, the group came to work, not to listen to you. The participants should do 95 percent of the talking. Become aware of how often you talk. Do you speak after each contribution of the group, or every second or third? This is a measure of the degree to which you are controlling the flow and monopolizing the attention of your group. Talk only when you have to, and then be short and concise.

## HOW TO HANDLE SILENCES

Silences produce some of the most difficult times for facilitators. There you are in front of a group and nothing is happening—nobody is talking. It is a great temptation to start talking yourself—just out of sheer nervousness.

Different kinds of silences convey different meanings. Check out what is happening. Is the group just pondering a point and making a natural pause? Or the silence could be the result of confusion, fatigue, or boredom. Find out what's happening—don't assume too much. Try "Hey, is everyone asleep or are you thinking?" "Everything all right?" Or "Is everyone lost or do you just want some time to reflect?"

If you ask a question and don't get an immediate response, don't say anything; just wait awhile. If you answer your own questions, people will get lazy and let you do the work for them. Wait them out.

If you really want some suggestions on what to do next, say, "I need some help. What do you think we should do next?" But then be quiet! Don't start offering possibilities until people have come to grips with the question for a while. If, after a minute or two, nobody comes up with anything, you can prime them by suggesting some examples: "For example, we could move on to the next agenda item or take a break or try coming at this problem from a different point of view—what do you think?" If no useful suggestions are forthcoming, you can offer a menu of alternatives and see if you can get some commitment around one.

Finally, if you feel some movement is better than no movement, you can take the proverbial bull by the horns and say, "Well, since there doesn't seem to be any strong feeling one way or another, I suggest we try . . ." But keep in mind that while there are times when it is appropriate to be forceful and even dictatorial, if you assume too much control, your group will revolt and tell you to stop being so pushy, or worse, become totally dependent on you and relinquish a sense of responsibility for the success of the meeting.

## HOW TO ENSURE PARTICIPATION

You'll recall two problems that limit effective participation: (1) difficulty in getting a chance to speak, and (2) fear of personal attack (the group-rape syndrome). It's your role as facilitator to prevent these problems.

By consent of the group, a facilitator is empowered to act as a gallant police officer. A good facilitator promises to make sure that every group member has an equal opportunity to be heard and is protected from personal attack. (This includes group members who are absent from the meeting.) You don't have to be an experienced group leader to keep these promises. By handling yourself like a fair and friendly traffic cop you can go a long way to promoting participation.

Start the meeting on a positive note. It's hard for people to be creative and productive in a negative atmosphere. Most people relinquish their creativity when they are confronted with "Yes, but . . ." or with put-downs: "That's silly." "That's impractical." "That'll never work."

Your role is to be positive and encouraging. Help the group along. Let them know when they're doing a good job: "Good idea! We're really moving along. We're really beginning to work together now. You're doing fine! Let's keep it up." By establishing a positive, nonthreatening atmosphere, you'll help people in the group express themselves—especially the shy or naturally quiet ones. They'll be more open and responsive. When they don't feel so tentative and cautious, they'll feel freer to contribute what they might otherwise consider an outrageous idea (often the most creative). You'll hear them saying, "This is pretty far out, but maybe . . ."

## LYING DOESN'T HELP

It's important to compliment the group, but don't exaggerate. Be sincere. The group will sense when it's not doing a good job, and if you lie to them about it you'll only reduce your credibility. Instead, when things go wrong, say so—but state it so as to encourage the group to recognize that the situation can be changed:

"Well, it looks as if we're getting bogged down. We were doing fine a while ago, but we got distracted. Some of you look as if you've tuned out. How are you feeling? Let's do a little backtracking and review the group memory to see how we got off the track. I think we can still head back in the right direction. Come on, anyone remember what we were trying to do?"

By all means do accept incomplete ideas. People don't always think in well-formed prose. Group members may offer ideas that sound strange, incomplete, fragmented. Accept them anyway. Don't tell somebody to rethink a notion before offering it. If an idea is impossible for you to decipher, ask him or her to help you rephrase it. If it sounds like the tip of an iceberg, you might say something like: "Fine, if you want to add more later, we can always come back to it. Maybe the group will want to work more on that idea, too. Okay?"

Try to move along with the energies of the individuals and the group as a whole; flow with your people. If they're thinking in disorganized fragments, let them do that for a while. See whether they're able to pull themselves and their thoughts together.

Protect the group from anyone's domination. In a heterogeneous group there are bound to be many social and professional types. And there is almost always one person who loves to do all the talking. As facilitator, you can try to take the focus and the floor away from that individual by deftly interrupting, "Thanks, Bob. Now, what do you think, Ruth?"

## HOW TO PUNCTURE A FILIBUSTER

To handle this kind of situation, you have to move quickly and discipline your body language. Move toward the person who does all the talking. When he or she looks at you or stops to take a breath, leap in and turn to someone else (you may even have to resort to turning your back on the marathon talker). If you do this a few times and the person still doesn't get the hint, you may have to be blunt: "Bob, you're sure doing a lot of talking. Let's hear from some of the other people." The secret is obvious—be gentle but firm.

Sometimes individuals in groups get left out. Their feelings get hurt and they become alienated. For a variety of reasons they may have trouble articulating their views. Quiet members can get run over by the highly verbal and aggressive people in the group. Some people feel no one listens to them anyway, or that their views are "too different" and therefore won't be respected. They clam up and withdraw.

In community gatherings the "expectation theory" often sabotages participation. That is, the poor and uneducated go to meetings with the expectation that professionals (teachers, principals, city planners, government officials) and other well-educated people will naturally display their verbal prowess and dominate the meeting. Likewise, the latter will expect the minority group to be passive and listen. It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. The same thing can happen when people from different levels of a hierarchical organization get together.

Skillful facilitation can greatly broaden the participation in these situations. As the process guide, you can hold back the highly verbal and aggressive people while you encourage responses from the rest. At first, it's like pulling teeth, but after a while people will feel more at ease and less shy. What's more important, as their self-confidence increases, people get used to the reality of participating. Then they begin to expect and demand it.

## HOW TO AVOID REPETITION

Nothing saps a group's energy like being bored by people who constantly repeat themselves or by long-winded discussions. The group memory can help you get the group off the merry-go-round. You can remind people that they've already said something. Pointing to his words on the group memory, you can look at Richard and say, "You've already said that. See, Richard, we've got it written down. Is there anything new you'd like to add? If not, let's go on."

If people get off the subject, you can refer to the group memory and say, "Here, we said we were going to talk about this. I'm not sure that's the problem you're addressing now. If you want, we can put that down too, and tag it for later." Or if someone is just talking too much about the topic at hand, gently nudge her: "Gloria, could you try to be more concise?" Be prepared to deal with people who come to meetings with the intention of using the group as a captive audience to air their personal philosophy or gripes.

There is a difference between creative conflict and interpersonal confrontation. Creative conflict occurs when people are actively stating and listening to opposing points of view. Any agitation that results is directed at the *ideas*, not at the people voicing them. But interpersonal confrontations can bottle up creative resolutions: when two or more people begin to focus on each other's personalities rather than their ideas, when they begin to detour into petty bickering, someone has to intervene before the entire group's energy is distracted.

## HOLD YOUR FIRE!

When destructive arguments start, try to get the combatants to focus their energy on solving problems rather than on attacking each other. Maybe this will work: "That's one idea. Let's not evaluate it yet. The recorder will just write that down for now. How about some other ideas? What do you think? Let's keep it positive and constructive." Whenever possible, try to get participants to deal with their interpersonal conflicts outside the meeting room.

To ensure a positive environment (especially if you anticipate that there will be personal confrontations), ask everyone to say what he/she likes about an idea before stating a negative concern. This often prevents potential solutions from strangulation in their infancy.

Some individuals particularly need to be protected from being interrupted or having words stuffed in their mouths by other group members. It's your job to guard the rights of the not-so-articulate. Be patient yourself and hold the reins on impatient group members: "Take your time! We'll wait for you. Hold on; let Martin try to say it in his own words. If he wants help, he'll ask for it." Sometimes the group will want to rush; certain members will try to steamroll over the less articulate and aggressive people. Slow them down: "Take your time. Don't rush; we've got enough time. Let's hear from Joan."

Don't let group members bully others. Don't let people criticize or insult each other. If someone says, "That's a dumb idea —boy, are you stupid," you should counter with, "Hold on! Harry's ideas are just as important as everyone else's." Group members will appreciate this and feel more comfortable about participating and sharing their personal ideas if they know they won't be jumped on.

## SEE YOURSELF AS OTHERS SEE YOU

Being in front of the group and having the members focused on you as a leader is a mixed blessing. As facilitator, you should become aware of the nonverbal messages your body posture and movements send to the group members. You may think you are projecting a pleasant and positive visage, when in reality you are shaking your head negatively. Try to watch yourself sometime on videotape or practice in front of a mirror. Become aware of how you use your body to bear down, to exert power or to back away from a situation. Often, out of sheer exhaustion or dire frustration, your body will relay a negative message to the group. And since we've already discussed the importance of setting and maintaining a positive tone, it's obvious that a wilted facilitator can be detrimental to a group.

Be aware of your "space language." That is, carefully arrange the meeting environment to make it the most comfortable and efficient space possible. To project a sense of openness, closeness, and receptivity, don't put anything (such as a table, podium, or desk) between yourself and the group. It may be difficult enough to establish rapport without purposefully building a fence to separate yourself from the group.

In other words, be sensitive to your environment. Since you are facing the group directly, you can make eye contact with everyone easily and see when someone wants to talk or when several people want to say something at the same time. By nodding, pointing, moving toward someone, or addressing someone by name, you can gently control the flow of conversation. In a small group you may not have to do much signaling, but when a group consists of seven or more people, your traffic functions become very important.

## HOW TO REGULATE TRAFFIC

Your objective is to get those people who want to talk to line up and go to bat one at a time—and to prevent anyone from barging to the head of the line. You can accomplish this in a variety of ways. When several people start talking at the same time, you can say, "Hold on! Let's go one at a time. Why don't you go first, Mary, and then Phil and Harry." And when someone is talking and a few others signal that they want to speak, you can recognize them in the order you want them to talk by pointing to them in sequence. ("You, you, and then you.") If someone butts in, say, "Wait a minute, Frank! Phil and Harry have been waiting to talk, and then you go." Members of your group then see that you are firm but fair. They'll relax and be content to catch your eye because they know they will get a chance to be heard. In large meetings (over fifteen people) you may have to insist on the raising of hands.

Sometimes as you stand in front of an energetic group, you can feel as if you are standing in the middle of a jungle path with all kinds of animals rushing to a water hole. Loud, assertive beasts are pushing their way past others; sleek, speedy animals dart back and forth; timid animals wait with watchful eyes for a chance to move without being crushed. And then there are the fierce animals, more hungry than thirsty, ready to leap upon an unsuspecting fellow traveler. It is your job to tame these beasts and get them to move along peacefully together.

## HOW TO DEAL WITH PROBLEM PEOPLE

In almost every meeting one or two people cause problems for the rest. Dealing with these problem people is like walking a tightrope. You must maintain a delicate balance between protecting the group from the dominance of individual members while protecting individuals from being attacked by the group. As always, you should try ways for everyone to win before resorting to interventions which will produce win/lose solutions.

Here is a method we have found helpful. While each situation is a little different, the following sequence of responses usually works.

**Accept.** When a problem person disrupts a meeting, begin by accepting what the person is doing, rather than simply ignoring the interruption. You can acknowledge the individual's action by describing it without evaluating. When a Doubting Thomas makes a loud noise in disapproval of a particular suggestion, you might say, "Thomas, looks like you don't believe that we'll be able to reach consensus on this. Am I correct?" Always check out your perceptions. Don't rush off to assumptions. You may be wrong.

**Legitimize.** Once you have let a problem person know that you have heard him or her correctly, legitimize the validity of the feelings behind the behavior. "Thomas, I know you're concerned. The process of coming to consensus can be frustrating. And you may be right." You don't have to agree with the problem person; just acknowledge that it is legitimate to feel that way. Point out that he or she may be helping the group by raising doubts or introducing different points of view.

**Defer.** Suppose you have reached a decision point: You can either deal with the issue right away or try to get agreement to defer until later. Let's take the latter option first. In many situations it's better not to try to resolve an issue in the middle of a meeting, or it's just more appropriate to address it later. Make sure that the concern is recorded in the group memory so it will not be forgotten; then explain to the problem person why you prefer to defer. In the case of the Doubting Thomas: "We won't know if we can reach consensus until we try. Are you willing to give it a chance? If we can't reach consensus we can always fall back and settle the matter by a win/lose approach." If the problem person agrees to defer, quickly refocus the meeting and continue with what you were doing before the interruption. If the problem person insists on continuing the disruption, go on to the following step.

**Graduated response.** In dealing with problem people, always begin with the most subtle and least threatening interventions. If a low-key approach doesn't seem to work, then you may have to escalate, saving direct confrontation as a last resort. Move gradually from win/win to win/lose techniques. In the case of a loudmouth, begin by looking directly at the person, thanking the individual for his or her contribution, and then calling on someone else. "Thank you, Harry. Okay, Elizabeth, you're next." If this doesn't work, move to Harry's side of the room and finally step up very close to Harry, making him feel uncomfortable by your physical proximity, by your invasion of his private space. Look him in the eye and say, "We've got that, Harry!" Still remaining close, turn away from Harry and call on someone else. If that doesn't work, confront Harry outside the meeting! "What's going on, Harry? Why are you dominating the meeting and not letting other people have a chance to talk?" Finally, you may have to confront Harry in front of the group: "Hold on, Harry. It's my opinion that you're dominating this meeting and not giving other people a chance to talk. I'd like to check my perceptions out with the rest of you. Do you feel the same way?" This is the most threatening approach and should be reserved for last.

## MEET THE PROBLEM PEOPLE

Problem people fall into certain basic types. Here's how you can handle some of those types.

**The latecomer** always comes to meetings late, making a big commotion, stopping the meeting and wanting to be caught up. As a general rule, don't confront the chronic latecomer in the meeting in front of the group. It won't help and will just lead to embarrassment. There are any number of reasons why a latecomer doesn't come on time: he or she doesn't think the meeting is very important, doesn't believe it will start on time, tries to schedule too much, or is always behind. Wait until after the meeting and then simply ask the latecomer why he or she is late for the meeting so frequently. Don't lecture! Ask the latecomer what would make the meeting important enough to want to be on time. Perhaps you might ask the latecomer to be the facilitator or recorder for the next meeting.

The only way meetings are going to start on time is by starting them on time. Waiting five minutes at one meeting will lead to a ten-minute delay the next. And pretty soon everybody will be timing their arrival according to their personal estimate of when the meeting really will begin. If you start meetings on time, people will get the idea that when you say ten-thirty, you mean ten-thirty and not ten-forty-five. (If it's ten-thirty and only a few people have arrived, let *them* decide when to begin the meeting. Maybe they will think it's a waste of time to begin before certain other members are present.)

Every group member is going to be late sometime. To keep disruptions to a minimum, focus the meeting away from the door. When someone comes in late, acknowledge his or her presence: "Hi, Rita, glad you could come. Sit down here and catch up by reading the group memory." Don't stop the meeting to review. Let the latecomer sit quietly without participating for a while to get a feeling for what has been happening. If the latecomer is a critical person and a detailed review is required, take a short break and review the group memory without wasting other people's time.

The early leaver drains the energy of the meeting by leaving before it ends. Like the latecomer, this individual shouldn't be confronted before the group. Find out later why this disruptive behavior continues. Maybe your meetings are too long or too loose. Maybe there is something you can learn from the early leaver.

At the beginning of the meeting, check to see if everyone can stay until the end. If all the participants commit themselves to staying, a potential early leaver is less likely to sneak out. If one or more people announce they are going to leave early, find out when and decide at the beginning of the meeting whether you will continue in the absence of these members. There is nothing worse than continuing a meeting with people slowly wandering out. It's like sitting in a bathtub and watching the warm water drain out around you.

**The broken record** keeps bringing up the same point over and over again. Use the group memory to acknowledge that the point is important to the individual. Demonstrate that it has been heard and recorded several times. "Yes, Alice, I know this idea is really important to you. We have written it down on page three and on page six of the group memory. We won't lose it. We will have a chance to evaluate it later with all the other ideas when we are finished generating alternatives. Is there something else that you want to add? If not, can you let go of it now?" If the individual is worked up over the issue and looks as if he or she needs an opportunity to talk it out, you could suggest, "Why don't we take three minutes now to hear what you've got to say, so you can let go of it. We want you to be able to free your mind so that you can move along with us through the rest of the meeting."

**The Doubting Thomas** constantly puts down everything: "That will never work"; "That'll never happen"; "I don't like that." This Thomas is always negative; you're wrong until you prove yourself to be right. While it's healthy to have a skeptic in any group, aggressive negativism is a damper on creative effort. As a facilitator you can use mental judo to cope with the doubting Thomas. Get the whole group to agree to a process of not evaluating ideas for a set period of time, then use this agreement to correct anyone who violates it, especially the doubting Thomas: "Wait a minute, Harry! You and the rest of the group agreed not to evaluate ideas for a while. You just

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jumped on Joe's suggestion. Hold on! You'll get a chance to evaluate ideas later."

**The headshaker** nonverbally disagrees in a dramatic and disruptive manner. Headshakers shake heads, roll eyes, cross and uncross legs, slam books shut, push chairs back, or madly scribble notes after someone has said something. These nonverbal gestures can interrupt a meeting as effectively as words. Perhaps more insidious for you as a facilitator, the headshaker can grab your attention and get you to lose your temper at him or her. You begin to find yourself reacting to whatever the headshaker does, since you're the only one in the group who is directly facing this person.

The first strategy to try is to ignore the headshaker and focus your attention on the person who is talking. Often the habitual headshaker is unaware of his or her behavior. You can turn to the individual and say something: "Frank, I see you're shaking your head. Looks like you disagree with what has just been said. Do you want to share your reactions with the rest of the group?" Sometimes if you treat these gestures like any other negative comment, Frank will become more aware of what he is doing and tend to control his body language. But if the headshaker becomes disruptive or extremely annoying, wait until a break and share your perceptions. "Frank, every time you start shaking your head, you interrupt the meeting just as much as if you had cut somebody off verbally. What's bothering you?" Perhaps he has a legitimate gripe. Eventually you may have to say, "I think you're being unfair to the others, and I personally find it really annoying! Please try to control your body language!"

**The dropout** sits at the back of the room, doesn't say anything or reads a book or doodles. The dropout tends to be more disturbing to the facilitator than the rest of the group. You're trying to run an energetic, creative meeting and Carl is sitting there, yawning and reading a magazine. There is an almost irresistible urge to catch the dropout in the act by asking

"What do you think about that, Carl?" And then watch him squirm. Gotcha! But sometimes the doodler hasn't really dropped out. Some people think better with a pencil in their hands. Or the real dropout may have a good justification; perhaps there is no reason for him to be at the meeting at all. Sometimes just walking up near the dropout is enough to wake him or her up. Or wait until you have eye contact, ask a question, and then take the dropout off the hook by turning to someone else: "What's your idea on this, Carl? I'll give you a moment to think. How about you, Jennifer?" During the break, ask the dropout why he or she isn't participating. Sometimes this behavior is an indication the meeting is not very effective, that a topic is irrelevant, or that the dropout is more or less understandably preoccupied with something else for the time being.

**The whisperer** is constantly whispering to a neighbor and is one of the most irritating of the problem people. It is very hard to concentrate with two people whispering and giggling near you. But many group members don't have enough courage to object. As facilitator, try walking up close to the whisperers. Often this low-key intervention will work. If there is a lot of whispering going on, you can say, looking around the room, "Hey, let's keep a single focus here! We won't get anything done if people are going off in different directions." If two cronies are really going at it, you can stop the meeting and say, "Do you want to share what you're talking about with the rest of the group? If not, why don't you go outside the room to talk? We still have a lot of work to do here." At a break, ask them what's going on. A very subtle technique is to find a way to get chronic whisperers to sit apart from each other.

**The loudmouth** talks too much and too loud, dominates the meeting, and is seemingly impossible to shut up. Loudmouths are a common breed, gravitating naturally to meetings of all kinds. Often the loudmouth is the senior person or decision-maker in a meeting—a fact which makes dealing with the loudmouth more difficult for the facilitator. The most subtle techniques for coping with loudmouths involve your physical position in relation to them. Try moving closer and closer to them while they are talking and maintain eye contact until you are standing right in front of them. Your physical presence—you standing, they sitting—will often make them aware of their behavior and they will stop talking. Then, immediately shift your focus and call on someone else. Otherwise, deal with loudmouths outside the meeting. Often loudmouths are people who have to blurt out ideas as soon as they come into their heads. Give them a pad of paper and ask them to create their individual memory, or get them to serve as recorder. That will keep them busy and keep them from talking. Point out that they are dominating the meeting and preventing others from participating. If nothing else works, you may have to confront them directly in the meeting.

**The attacker** launches personal attacks on another group member or on you as facilitator. If two group members are going at it, try to interrupt the fight by physically moving between them, getting them to talk to you rather than to each other. Ask, "What's all this about? What's the problem?" Remind them that everyone is at the meeting to work on a task, not to watch them work out their personal problems. "That's fine if you want to work out your differences, but why don't you do that after the meeting?" Use the group memory to refocus on ideas rather than individuals. Walk up close to the recorder and get the attacker to focus on what is being written. "Make sure we are capturing your criticisms. You feel that this suggestion over there is unrealistic and unworkable?" Also, you might try the techniques of deferred evaluation (see the Doubting Thomas, above).

If it's you who is being attacked, try to resist the natural instinct to deny the charges and defend yourself. If it's your facilitation that's being criticized, take a step backward, give yourself a moment to collect yourself, thank the attacker for his or her criticism, and then use the boomerang technique by turning the issue back to the attacker for positive suggestions. "You feel that I am not giving you and Louise enough opportunity to state your case. What do you think I should do to correct the imbalance?" If the attack is in defense of other group members, check out the accusation with them. "Louise, do you feel the same way? Do you feel that I've not been giving you enough time to state your case?" This technique can be a way of getting the group as a whole involved in correcting the situation, but don't let the group attack the attacker.

The interpreter always speaks for other people. "What Alberto is trying to say is . . ." If Alberto is in the middle of talking, jump in quickly and say, "Hold on a minute, George, let Alberto speak for himself. Go on, Alberto, finish what you were saying." Or if Alberto has already finished, check out the interpreter's interpretation with him. "Alberto, do you think George understood what you said? Is that an accurate representation of what you were saying?" This technique gives group members an opportunity to tell George they don't need him to be their mouthpiece.

The gossiper introduces hearsay and gossip into the meeting: "Well, I overheard them talking about . . ."; "I remember the regulations saying something about . . ." Hours of valuable meeting time are wasted arguing over whether something is true or not when five minutes and a telephone call would answer the questions definitively. When you see potentially important information being introduced with vague qualifiers ("Somebody mentioned that . . ."; "If I remember correctly "), check it out immediately: "Do you know that for a fact?" "Are you sure?" "Can anyone else verify that?" If the responses are weak, ask, "How could we find out the answer to that question? Who would know?" Then, either defer the issue until after the information can be obtained or take a short break to make a telephone call, look up the information, or invite an expert to your next meeting.

**The know-it-all** uses credentials, age, length of service, or professional status to argue a point: "Well, I'm the one who has a Ph.D. in physics, and I know it doesn't work that way"; "I've been working in this business longer than anyone else here, and I know that will never fly." Acknowledge the know-it-all's expertise once, but emphasize why this issue is being considered by the group. "Yes, we all recognize and respect your experience in this area, but the decision has to be made by the group as a whole after weighing all the alternatives." "Yes, we know this is your specialty and you may be right, but one reason why we're tackling the problem as a group is to come up with some new insights and solutions. Your knowledge may actually be blinding you to new ways of looking at the problem. Will you indulge us for a while even though some of the suggestions may seem crazy to you?" Or try, "That's your opinion, but there may be equally valid other points of view."

**The backseat driver** keeps telling you what you should be doing: "I would have let people discuss the issue more before brainstorming"; "I would move on to the next issue if I were you"; "Tell him to shut up." As a servant to the group, the facilitator should request process suggestions from the group and generally follow them. When a backseat driver starts criticizing your facilitation, ask him or her to suggest a procedure and then check it out with the rest of the group. If the other group members concur, act on the suggestion immediately. The backseat driver will be satisfied and defused for a while. If the group disagrees, the backseat driver's argument will be with other group members, not with you. Occasionally you will encounter a backseat driver who thinks that he or she is a more sensitive, skillful facilitator and will disagree with everything you do. This can be really annoying and slow up the meeting. Point out that there are different styles of facilitation and many ways of approaching problems. There is no one right way, but you have to start someplace. Ask the backseat driver politely to bear with you and try your approach. If it doesn't work, the group can always try something else. In extreme cases, you may have to challenge the backseat driver openly: "Do you want to facilitate? That's fine if you do, but if you don't, please do me the courtesy of withholding your criticisms until after the meeting." The backseat driver will usually back down, but if your offer is taken up, step down gracefully. The backseat driver will either do a better job, which is okay, or do a worse job, in which case the group will come to respect the difficulties of the position, appreciate your facilitation, and ask you to step back into your role. But don't say, "I told you so."

The busybody is always ducking in and out of the meeting, constantly receiving messages or rushing out to take a phone call or deal with a crisis. What's worse, the busybody is often the manager or senior person in the meeting. That's why he or she feels so free to come and go, but by doing so the busybody ends up wasting his or her time and the time of the rest of the participants. During each departure the meeting may come to a standstill or the busybody has to be briefed upon reentry. Often there is no point in continuing a meeting if a key person is absent. As a facilitator, it is almost impossible to deal with a busybody during the meeting. Only group members or the manager/chairperson can exert any real pressure on the busybody to stop the interruptions and remain in the meeting. You can recommend that the meeting be recessed or adjourned until the busybody can attend. without interruptions. At least this preserves the time and energy of the other participants and helps to demonstrate to the busybody that his or her actions are disruptive.

The best time to deal with a chronic busybody is before the meeting. Point out how maddening and inefficient this behavior is and see if you can get the busybody to agree to hold all calls for the duration of the meeting; or you can meet away from the busybody's office where there can be no interruptions. Another possibility is to schedule the meeting before or after normal business hours to minimize distractions. In any case, if you can get the busybody before the meeting to make a commitment to remain in the meeting for a given time without interruptions, you will have some leverage you can use if the individual resumes busybody behavior: "Hey, just a minute! I thought you promised to hold all calls for the next hour."

**The interrupter** starts talking before others are finished. Often the interrupter doesn't mean to be rude, but becomes impatient and overly excited. Like the loudmouth, the interrupter is afraid that a new, red-hot idea will be lost if it isn't blurted out immediately. As a facilitator you should deal with an interrupter immediately. Remember: One of your major functions is to be a traffic cop and let everyone have a chance to be heard without being cut off. This may be one of the first tests of your neutrality and service to the group. People will be watching to see if you will really protect them. They want to see if you will stop the interrupter, even if he or she is a VIP. You should jump in immediately, saying something like, "Hold on, Irving, let Charlene finish what she was saying." You must be impartial and fair in your interventions. Don't play favorites. Between meetings you can point out to the chronic interrupter how irritating his behavior is to other group members and suggest that the interrupter bring a pad of paper to write down ideas until there is an appropriate time to express them—a personal group memory. Or make the interrupter the recorder—recording is a good exercise in listening. Some interrupters and loudmouths have become excellent recorders and have made dramatic changes in their behavior.

**The teacher's pet** spends more energy looking for approval from the facilitator than focusing on the content of the meeting. The teacher's pet can be very distracting to you as a facilitator and can hook you into paying too much attention to one individual. You are supposed to serve the group, not pass judgment on how well it's performing. You can be encouraging, but don't let the group or an individual become dependent on you and use you as a crutch. If a teacher's pet keeps talking to you rather than other group members, walk over to one side of the group and break eye contact. The idea is to get people to talk to each other, not to you. If the teacher's pet tries to trap you into an evaluation, boomerang the question back. "I don't know, Ruth. How do *you* think the meeting's going?" The responsibility for the success or failure of a meeting must be shared by all participants.

## HOW TO REMAIN NEUTRAL AND BUILD TRUST

One reason why the Interaction Method works so well is that it insists on the neutrality of the person who runs the meeting. Running a meeting is like driving a car; it's easy to steer in any direction you want. If you are personally affected by the outcome of a meeting, it's almost impossible not to maneuver the meeting (consciously or subconsciously) toward results that you favor. As we have pointed out, being a manager/chairperson of a group and running your own meeting is like trying to be captain, quarterback, referee, and record keeper at the same time. That's too many roles to play at one time.

And yet, let's face it: no one is really neutral; everyone has personal preferences and values. So the practical objective is to maintain "operational neutrality." That means that as far as the participants of a meeting are concerned, you, the facilitator, are not letting your own ideas affect the course of the proceedings. It is part of the social contract that you make with your group: that each member has a responsibility of letting you know if you exhibit a bias toward one point of view. If no one objects to your behavior during the meeting, you have achieved operational neutrality.

In most meetings the role of facilitator can be rotated in your group. Periodically, someone (other than the manager/chairperson) can be chosen to plan and conduct the meeting, so each participant only has to facilitate every few weeks or months.

For very critical meetings, when everyone is emotionally involved, it may be important to find someone from outside your group to facilitate, someone from another department or division or from outside your organization.

If you follow the guidelines here, you can achieve operational neutrality even if you have a strong investment in a meeting. If you refrain from arguing for a particular point of view, you may be able to assist others to work creatively together and reach a win/win solution. You will find that many (if not all) your "great" ideas will come up naturally.

## KEEP QUIET!

Don't answer questions about a meeting's substantive content. One of the biggest traps for a beginning facilitator looms when someone in the group asks about your thoughts about the subject: "Weren't profits at an all-time low last quarter?" "Do you know what the executive vice president thinks about that?" "What do you think about that?"

It is a great temptation to respond to such questions, particularly during an argument, because people are used to getting answers from a person who stands in front of a group. The trick is to boomerang the questions back to the group: "That's a good question. Who knows the answer?" "Carlos, you're the manager of this group. Do you know the answer to that question." "I don't know. How can we find out?" "What do you think?"

Sometimes, but not often, a member of the group may try to pin you down: "Hey, man, what do you think? Don't you have any feelings about this? You're a part of this effort."

Then the thing to do is to remind the individual of your function in the meeting and why it's important that you don't get involved in issues. Like this: "I've been asked to facilitate this meeting. To do a good job and to make sure that I don't manipulate anyone I promised to try to remain neutral, to stay out of the issues. Sure, I have feelings about the issues; any person would, and I'll be happy to share them with you after the meeting. But as long as I'm in my role as facilitator, I am not supposed to answer that sort of question. If I take sides, I'll lose my credibility." If you believe you know something that no one else in the meeting does and this piece of information is essential for dealing with the problem at hand, then you can step briefly out of your role and offer your contribution.

## SUCCESS DOESN'T DEPEND ON YOU

Don't assume the responsibility for saving your group. In your enthusiasm and desire to make a meeting work, you might begin to think that success totally depends on you. It doesn't. Remember, you're a servant of your group; you're doing what the group members want you to do. If they make a decision and it proves to be a poor one, it's not your fault. It's always easier to find someone else to blame for poor meetings, and you, as facilitator, are a likely target. Remind your group, particularly if things start breaking down and fingers start pointing, that it's their meeting; if they don't like what's happening they can change it.

This is not to say that you have no responsibility for what happens. The perceptiveness and appropriateness of your suggestions about the group's methods are important to the success of a meeting. Just don't let yourself get saddled with all the responsibility.

Remember that one of the best ways to achieve neutrality is to ask the group for help: "It's really going to be hard to remain neutral in matters as important as these, so please help me. Let me know if I cut you off too soon or push you in a direction where you don't want to go." If you let people know that you're trying your best and seek their assistance, they will be more tolerant of your mistakes and feel more responsible for what happens. But you have to be sincere in your request and nondefensive when you are criticized—and you almost always will be!

Toward the beginning of a meeting, in particular, you will be tested. Someone will say, "Hey, you evaluated my idea." Or "You didn't listen to what I said." Or "I think you're forcing things too much." When that happens, you must thank the person for his or her criticisms and back off. Like this: "Thank you for letting me know. I'll try not to do that again. Tell me if I do." Don't let your hackles get up, even if you think that what you were doing is appropriate. Once people accept that they do have control over how the meeting is run, that you're not a henchman for the boss, they will relax and be less aggressive.

## WHEN TO STEP DOWN

In extreme cases, when emotions are high and the level of trust low, you may have to offer to step down as facilitator. In community meetings where people may be suspicious of this new meeting technique, you may have to add after defining your role, "Let's try operating this way for an hour or so. If it's not getting anywhere, or you feel you can do better without my assistance, I'll be glad to step down."

Very rarely have we seen a group ask the facilitator to leave. One case involved a militant group of students at a conference. Then, after an hour of meeting without a facilitator, the chaos was so extreme that some students started to say, "Hey, who's running this meeting, anyway? What we need is facilitation or whatever you call it. Where is that guy? We need him back." In the end the entire group asked for the facilitator to return and showed a deeper understanding and appreciation for his function.

It is acceptable to step out of your role as facilitator and contribute your own ideas and evaluations when:

1. the level of trust in a group is high and there is a genuine nterest in your participation;
2. the meeting is very small (three or four people) and you re an essential part of the team;
3. you have such a great idea that you can't hold it any longer; or
4. the problem with which the group is dealing lies in an area of your own special expertise and you are asked for advice.

When you step out of your role as facilitator, make sure that he transitions are clear, both out and back. Ask permission of he group: "Is it all right with you if I take off my facilitator hat and toss in an idea on the subject?" (Wait for heads to nod.) "Okay, what I think is . . ." (Followed by a brief discussion.) "Okay, now I'm putting on my facilitator hat again. Are there any more thoughts on the subject?"

Don't do this too often. You group will get used to you as a facilitator and depend on your neutrality and process suggestions. Every time you step out of your role, people will have to relate to you in a different way. It can feel to them as if an outsider had just joined the group. Don't be surprised if your "brilliant" idea falls on deaf ears. We recall a facilitator who took off his hat to make a suggestion and it was dropped like a hot potato, but twenty minutes later a similiar idea was volunteered in a slightly different form by a group member—and adopted with great enthusiasm. If you are patient, you will be surprised how many times someone else will come with with "your" ideas.

## ADMIT YOUR MISTAKES

If you acknowledge from the outset that you're not infallible, the group will empathize with you. Being honest and good-humored about not having all the answers builds up your credibility with the group. If you make a mistake, be the first to admit and correct it: "Wait a minute—I forgot something. We should make sure everyone agrees there's really a problem concerning this issue before we spend time trying to solve it." Try to beat your critics to the punch. Demonstrate that you're wide awake—even to the point of being the first to criticize yourself if you do something dumb.

Although your role demands some acting from you (that you be vibrant, mobile, positive, energetic, etc.), by all means admit it whenever all those roles put too much strain on you. Tell the group if you're hung over, upset, tired, sick, or distracted. Elicit more than the usual support from them. Frankly admit how much you're going to have to depend on them.

When in deep doubt about how to handle a difficult situation, be honest about your predicament: "Look, I don't know quite how to handle this. Frankly, I'm lost. Does anyone have any suggestions about how we can get out of this jam?"

Never forget that you're not alone. As long as you maintain your honesty, people will stay by your side and sail through the meeting with you.

## HOW TO BE AN OBSERVER

Sometime, someone may ask to observe one of your meetings. That's fine, as long as your group approves and the role of observer is clearly defined. Observers are nonparticipants. They should sit in the back of the room, be silent, and not influence the course of the meeting either verbally or nonverbally (as head-shaking, nodding, frowning, etc.). It's the function of the facilitator to strictly enforce these ground rules. If they are constantly broken, the facilitator can ask the observer to leave. If an observer wants to begin participating in the meeting, the change must be approved by all group members; then the individual should physically join the group by moving forward and sitting in the semicircle of chairs.

## HOW TO BE AN EXPERT

At times your group may want to invite someone to make a presentation, answer some questions, give some advice, but not participate in the meeting. That's a legitimate request. It can be very disrupting to introduce a new person into an ongoing group, and many people have had bad experiences with experts coming to meetings and bossing everyone around.

As we have said before, people can accept almost any role for a time as long as the role is made clear and agreed upon in advance. The role of expert (or resource person) is to offer a service to the group—to be a consultant. The expert is to remain silent and observe unless called upon. If resource people understand what they are being asked to do ahead of the meeting, they won't be surprised and offended when they are not invited to join in the proceedings. It is the responsibility of the facilitator to explain the role of expert in advance, to keep the expert from dominating the meeting, and to ask him or her to leave if ground rules are violated.

# THE FACILITATOR

**FACILITATOR**

- IS A NEUTRAL SERVANT OF THE GROUP
- DOES NOT EVALUATE OR CONTRIBUTE IDEAS
- FOCUSES ENERGY OF GROUP ON A COMMON TASK
- SUGGESTS ALTERNATIVE METHODS & PROCEDURES
- PROTECTS INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR IDEAS FROM ATTACK
- ENCOURAGES TO PARTICIPATE
- HELPS THE GROUP FIND WIN/WIN SOLUTIONS
- COORDINATES PRE- AND POST-MEETING LOGISTICS

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**SPECIFIC TECHNIQUES:**

- CLEARLY DEFINE YOUR ROLE
- GET AGREEMENT ON A COMMON PROBLEM & PROCESS BEFORE BEGINNING
- BOOMERANG QUESTIONS BACK TO GROUP MEMBERS
- BE POSITIVE—COMPLIMENT THE GROUP
- DON'T TALK TOO MUCH
- SUPPORT THE RECORDER
- DON'T BE AFRAID TO MAKE MISTAKES
- HELP TO EDUCATE THE GROUP

## DIMENSIONS ESSENTIAL TO GROUP GROWTH

Here are dimensions along which groups typically develop and grow. Problems arise when there is lack of clarity about any of these dimensions. There are two kinds of results from how skillfully a group works out these dimensions of its growth. One concerns task accomplishment. Tasks may be accomplished efficiently or inefficiently, thoroughly or only partially, with high quality or in a shoddy manner. The other kind of result has to do with maintenance of the group. There may be high esprit de corps where individuals are pleased and excited to be members. Or, there may be confusion and frustration where individuals readily leave the group.

For you to identify your own needs for skills training you need to determine what is problematic in your own group behavior for each of these dimensions. Making these determinations and gaining some skills to participate more creatively in your own group is the concern of this workshop.

### Membership

Individuals identified as being part(s) of the group are said to have membership. At the level of the individual, membership applies to issues of a person's self-identity. It speaks to questions of:

1. Who am I?
2. What can I be?
3. What do I expect and desire of myself?

For the more complex levels of group behavior, it speaks to questions such as:

1. What does it mean to be a member of this group, organization, community or society?
2. Will I be accepted?
3. How will I be expected to act and respond?
4. What norms will prevail?
5. Will I be trusted?
6. Will I feel satisfied that I am needed and respected?
7. Will I feel adequate?
8. Will my personal motivations fit in with those of the group?
9. How much freedom will I have to express myself?

Problems arise from lack of clarity about membership questions as well as conflict over what the answers to such questions should be.

Some individual skills that may reduce these problems are how to:

1. Listen carefully to understand what others are saying.
2. Share feelings and ideas spontaneously.
3. Listen to and try out others' ideas.
4. Ask for others' impressions and reactions.

5. Call attention to what is happening in the group.
6. Aid with identification and solution of a problem.
7. Call attention to group norms and help to evaluate norms.

## Influence

The ways that influence happens among and between parts of the group needs to be considered.

1. Is influence recognized as a normal, necessary operating characteristic of the group?
2. What behaviors are acceptable and unacceptable as kinds of influence in the group?
3. Are members explicit about accepting certain kinds of influence as well as rejecting other kinds?
4. How much variance of individual styles of influence is tolerated?
5. Are different bases of influence accepted for different types of situations, e.g., expertise in one situation as compared to forcefulness of personal style in another?
6. Does the use of influence tend to free resources of individuals rather than block them?
7. What are the ways that leadership occurs?
8. Are there different leaders in different situations?
9. How much flexibility of influence and leadership is there relative to roles and status of different parts of the group?

Problems arise from lack of clarity about influence questions as well as conflict over what the answers to such questions should be.

Some individual skills that may reduce these problems are how to:

1. Listen carefully to understand what others have said.
2. Speak clearly, directly and to the point.
3. Share feelings and the need to influence the other.
4. Listen to others and be willing to try out their ideas.
5. Let others know what effect their influence is having on you.
6. Try out a variety of ways to relate to others and influence them.
7. Help others report how they feel when being influenced.
8. Explain group difficulties when the influence process is being blocked.

## Feelings

Perhaps the most crucial contribution of psychology in the past few decades has been clarification of ways that feelings affect the operations of groups. They can affect any and all functions in facilitative and blocking ways. Feelings are tangible, measurable and enduring. Feelings not expressed as they occur are frequently expressed later in disguised, inappropriate and obstructive ways. Questions such as these are important.

1. What are acceptable and unacceptable ways of expressing different kinds of feelings in this group?
2. Are there any kinds of feelings for which there are no acceptable means of expression?
3. Do people trust each other?
4. What are the characteristic ways that less acceptable feelings show themselves and how obstructive are they?
5. How much variance in individual styles of expressing feelings is tolerated?
6. How spontaneous, open and direct are expressions of feelings?
7. Is the importance of the expression of feelings accepted?

Problems probably arise most frequently from lack of clarity about feelings. They also can stem from conflict over how feelings are expressed.

Some individual skills that may reduce these problems are how to:

1. Share feelings and ideas spontaneously.
2. Discuss own weaknesses and strengths with the group.
3. Elicit from others their honest feelings.
4. Report effect of the way others are reacting to own behavior.
5. Help the group express feelings and deal constructively with feeling content.
6. Accept expressions of feelings and encourage others to express their feelings in their own way.

## Individual Differences

No two groups, at any level, are the same. The capabilities of their characteristics vary according to the unique growth history of each. The issue here is one of capitalizing on the variations of the subgroups that make up the larger group. Below are some important questions concerning individual differences.

1. Are there procedures for identifying the unique capabilities of individuals?
2. How much divergence of self-interest is tolerated?
3. Are there clear norms and procedures for negotiating basic differences of self-interest?
4. Are there norms for conformity which conflict with the valuing of growth based on the interaction of differences?
5. Do others know and/or attempt to discover one's full range of resources?

6. Do expectations of a role or group extend to stereotyping individuals in it?
7. Are parts of a group used flexibly in accordance with their unique functional capabilities as opposed to each part being limited to a usual set of tasks?

The greatest problems concerning individual differences relate to group norms which deny and reject these differences by failing to recognize them as a source of strength and growth. While individual needs tend to be a concern in education, a lack of understanding of the dynamics and implications of individual differences of resources leads to especially difficult problems. They culminate in prejudice and discrimination where there could be the greatest opportunities for exploration and evolution.

Some individual skills that may reduce these problems are how to:

1. Ask others for their impressions about own skills, resources and performance.
2. Report awareness of own resources and capabilities.
3. Try out new behaviors, ideas and resources.
4. Raise questions about the individual differences in the group, about self-interest and norms.
5. Explain what is happening in the group with references to differences in individuals' resources and skills.

## Productivity

The concern here is for the ways that the group knows it is productive and for the quality of productivity it accomplishes rather than simply the quantity.

1. Is its productivity a creative synthesis of its unique needs and resources rather than the lowest common denominator of the capability of its subgroups?
2. Are its objectives stated operationally so that it can be measurably accountable for productiveness?
3. Are its procedures for production efficient--cost effective?
4. Are the products of the group congruent with its values and purpose?
5. Do these products contribute to desired social ends or to the maintenance of outmoded or objectionable ones as viewed by other groups?
6. How much energy is spent in arguing about the rightness or wrongness of ideas as compared to developing new ideas or combining ideas?
7. Do parts of the group experience a direct sense of satisfaction for their contribution to productivity?

The most observable kinds of problems concerning productivity involve low levels resulting from inefficient procedures and low sense of satisfaction in perceiving one's contribution. Less obvious, but perhaps especially important for education, is a lack of creative and motivating productivity versus the lowest common denominator of a tradition-bound system.

Some individual skills that may reduce these problems are how to:

1. Inquire about and explain why things happen as they do in the group.
2. Explain the difficulties the group has in getting a task accomplished.
3. Involve the group in stating goals, analyzing and diagnosing problems and producing a plan of action.
4. Evaluate and decide on the rightness and wrongness of certain ideas and plans.
5. Identify criteria for judging efficiency and effectiveness of the group achievement.

## Roles

What parts, or persons, within the group are expected to carry out which functions and in what ways? While there are general expectations that apply to all members, it is the particular combination of commonly shared expectations about functions people will perform and how they will relate to each other in performing them that define different roles within the group. The following kinds of questions are important.

1. How clear am I about what others expect of my role?
2. Am I clear about what I believe others should expect of my role?
3. Are most others clear about what they expect of my role, or only some of them?
4. Are there differences among these expectations?
5. Are there other roles in the group about which there are differences or a lack of clarity?
6. Are the expectations of each role realistic?
7. Are there expectations that place roles in conflict with each other?
8. Are there roles missing as evidenced by functions needed by the group that no one is expected to fulfill?

Problems arise frequently from lack of role clarity and from conflicting expectations about a role Another important kind of problem worth noting involves the overload and/or conflict that can occur from demands on individuals who are operating in more than one role.

Some individual skills that may reduce these problems are how to:

1. State clearly what one's own role expectations are.
2. Ask for other's expectations of one's role.
3. Inquire about and explain effects of the way in which a role is taken and the implications this has for group growth.
4. Report problems connected to the effects of operating in more than one role.
5. Report feelings as the result of a role overload.
6. Diagnose why role problems are present in a group.
7. Help the group create more realistic role expectations.

## Communications

The passage of information between people in the group also needs some attention. Note here that information applies to things that are "news," not noise. There may be other kinds of noise that are unintelligible or redundant. Such noise usually distorts, rather than aids, the passage of information. These are some of the important questions about communications.

1. Who talks to whom about what?
2. What modes and personal styles of communication are acceptable or unacceptable in the group?
3. How efficient are communications in terms of information flow versus noise and redundancy?
4. Is there feedback of information, checking for understanding and opportunity for two-way flow where needed?
5. Are formal and informal patterns of communication primarily functional rather than bound by tradition and conflicts or limited by assumptions?
6. How do norms, roles, expectations and feelings influence communications?
7. Are there bottlenecks, blocks, gaps or points of overload in the lines of communication?

Problems arise from lack of clarity about what constitutes "news" and from inadequacy perceived in the way communications are transmitted.

Some individual skills that may reduce these problems are how to:

1. Check to be sure the message is being received accurately.
2. Transmit messages simply and directly.
3. Share reactions about the clarity of messages being sent.
4. Solve communications problems.
5. Seek and accept help from others.
6. Report perceptions about how norms, roles and feelings influence the communication process.

## Goals

Goals of the group are those measurable objectives which it strives to achieve. Some goals are primary to the purpose for which the group exists. Others are instrumental to achieving the primary goals. They sometimes contribute to means to an end and sometimes to maintenance of the group. Important questions include the following.

1. How explicit are the goals of the group?
2. Have all critical goals been identified?
3. Is the group committed to any irrelevant or detrimental goals?
4. Are the goals stated operationally?
5. Are they feasible and realistic?
6. Are there conflicts among subparts of the group about what the goals are or should be?
7. Has the relative importance of goals and their relationships to each other as primary and instrumental been identified?

Problems are probably most often related to lack of clarity about goals, and sometimes related to conflict. When a problem is one of conflict about goals, it is more critical if based in value differences.

Some individual skills that may reduce these problems are how to:

1. Raise questions about what the group is doing or where it is going.
2. Offer one's own views on what the group is doing or where it is going.
3. Help the group achieve clarity about its goals.
4. Help deal with goal conflict.
5. Identify what the specific problem with goal setting is.
6. Contribute ideas for goal setting.

## Perception

Perception concerns the facets seen in and by the group and the meanings and interpretations placed on these facets. The following questions relate to perception.

1. Are there important aspects of the group which are not seen?
2. Do some roles, or parts of the group, tend to see only certain kinds of things?
3. Do some people tend to distort or misinterpret what they see?
4. Does reality actually appear different from the legitimate perspective of different roles?
5. How much overall congruence is there in perceptions experienced throughout the group?

6. Are similar perceptions demanded of all people of the group or are reports of discrepant perceptions supported as a potentially valuable breadth of perspective?
7. Does the group have ways of breaking its psychological set periodically to question whether it is open to new understandings in a changing world?

Problems arise especially from perceptions being limited by old, entrenched perspectives and from failure to understand that the same phenomena can appear different when viewed from truly different (as contrasted with simply limited) perspectives.

Some individual skills that may reduce these problems are how to:

1. Listen to and try out a different perspective.
2. Ask others to clarify the meanings and interpretations of various individual perceptions.
3. Check one's perceptions with others to test for congruence.
4. Experiment with perceiving things from a different vantage point.
5. Offer one's own views about how perceptions are being experienced by the group.
6. Inquire about and compare own perceptions with others' perceptions.

## SKILLS NEEDED BY MEMBERS OF PRODUCTIVE GROUPS[1]

Here is a list of important skills for productive group work. As you read, keep the following questions in mind:

A. To what extent did you practice these skills during the trio meeting in the last session?

B. What do you do that, for you, is a sign of your behavior in each category? (For example, eyes closed may be a sign of "trust," not boredom; asking probing questions may be a sign of "problem solving effectiveness," not hostility.) Note that much of what people actually do is a matter of personal style. The focus of this exercise is to identify the specific behaviors of your style for each category.

C. Which of these skills do you think you need to improve or acquire to contribute to your group back home becoming more productive?

1. Listening Skills: Works at understanding what others are saying; asks others to repeat; asks others to clarify. Tells others what he has heard; seems to have understood correctly what others have said.

2. Saying Skills: Says things clearly, using words others can understand. Speaks in a way that is direct and to the point. Asks what others have heard and offers to clarify. Others seem to understand correctly what he has said.

3. Openness: Shares feelings and ideas spontaneously. Willing to discuss own strengths and weaknesses. Emotions show clearly and appropriately (e.g., joy, boredom, anger, sorrow).

4. Trust: Is willing to listen to and try out others' ideas. Seeks and accepts help from others. Shows that he expects others to be sincere and honest with him.

5. Feedback: Asks for others' impressions of him. Shares his views of others with them. Seems aware of whether or not others are ready to receive his views; presents views in a helpful way. Lets others know when they have been helpful to him.

6. Awareness of Own Behavior: Shows he is aware of how others are reacting to his behavior; shows he is aware of how he is reacting

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[1] Adapted by permission from the Guide for Anchored Trainer Ratings, developed by Matthew B. Miles, Teachers College, Columbia University, in connection with the Cooperative Project for Educational Development, 1967.

to the behavior of others; shows he is considering the implications to himself; uses this awareness in considering whether or not his own behavior is what he wants it to be.

7. Experimenting with Own Behavior: Shows flexibility in taking different roles in the group at different times (e.g., leader, clarifier). Shows increasing variety of ways to relate to specific members of the group. Shows he is thinking about the meaning to himself as he tries these different behaviors.

8. Contributes to Group's Awareness of Itself: Helps members to be aware of what is happening as a group. Raises questions about what the group is doing, feeling, heading toward; offers own views on what the group is doing, feeling, etc.

9. Problem Solving Effectiveness: Helps the group make realistic progress in problem solving efforts. Is effectively work-oriented. Aids group productivity.

10. Helping Group Maintenance: Works well with own and others' feelings; helps develop and maintain good relationships in the group.

11. Group Diagnostic Ability: Able to understand why things happened as they did in group; can explain group difficulties as a basis for corrective or supportive action.

12. Overall Effectiveness as a Group Member: All things considered, makes effective contribution to own and others' learning and work.

Please keep this paper near for reference as you do the steps shown on the next page.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUP MEMBERS TO DEVELOP PARTICIPATIVE GROUPS

1. Responsibility for the group is shared by all members of the group. Identify with the group and its goals - if the group fails it's your fault, not the group's fault.

2. Decisions should always be made by the group. They are not made by the leader, any individual, or any clique - all important policies should be decided by the group. The group should set its own goals - and decide on the techniques that it should use to accomplish them.

3. Be informal. It is helpful to use first names, wear informal clothing, arrange chairs in an informal way (circles, not rows, etc.), encourage spontaneous discussion with few rules, as far as possible do away with voting, handraising, formal debate, Roberts' Rules, etc.

4. Use methods which allow as many as possible of the group to participate. Let group discuss frequently in subgroups - bring out minority and individual opinions by asking frequent questions of group members.

5. Be flexible. Be flexible in rules, agenda, and in all procedures in the group. You should establish an agenda for your meeting, but you should always modify it when you find that the group wishes to modify it. The constitution of your procedural rules should change progressively as the needs and interests of the group change.

6. The group should cut down the threat to individual members. Get the group acquainted with each other as persons - use informal seating - minimize rules - separate the members of cliques or friendship circles - discuss the problem of status - use subgroupings to get members used to talking in the group.

7. The group should continually evaluate its progress. This may be done by evaluation sheets, process reports, subgroup discussions, suggestion boxes, etc. The important point is that it should be done often, briefly and well.

8. Group members should be conscious of the importance of the roles they play in the group. Study the different roles that people can play, analyze the roles you play, consciously play roles that are helpful to group progress.

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9. Sit so that if possible all members of the group can easily see faces of all other members. Sit in a circle or a double circle - do not have leader sit or stand apart from the group - do not sit too close.

10. Let the group be active. Let group members move around frequently - encourage an informal atmosphere - consciously provide for movement and verbal participation of all members.

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## DEVELOPING PARTICIPATING TASK GROUPS

1. The large group will be divided into several small task groups consisting of a cross section of the participants:

   Teacher(s)
   Administrator(s)
   Support Staff
   Board Member(s)

2. Each group will select a chairperson. The responsibilities of the chairperson are:

   (a) keeping the group on task
   (b) obtaining feedback-summary of the group
   (c) reaching consensus, if needed
   (d) priority setting, if needed
   (e) reporting out to the large group

3. Each group will have a recorder assigned. The recorder is not an active contributor to the group. The responsibilities of the recorder are:

   (a) to record "High Points" of group discussion
   (b) to maintain all recordings for retrieval
   (c) to post recordings, if necessary

4. Each group will be assigned a group facilitator. The responsibilities of the facilitator are:

   (a) to make sure the task is understood
   (b) to keep participants actively and productively involved
   (c) to assist groups with completing tasks to their satisfaction
   (c) to have the group constantly use process skills which include:

   - communicating
   - consensus reaching
   - priority setting
   - listening
   - giving feedback
   - strategy designing
   - action planning
   - problem solving

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# FUNCTIONAL ROLES OF GROUP MEMBERS AND FACILITATORS

## Functional Roles of Group Members

Members of your SET discussion group may be observed performing a variety of functions, some helpful, others not helpful. A given discussion may have many members playing more than one role. Such functions have often been called role-taking. This set of roles is divided into three broad areas.

### Task Related Functions

Task-related functions are activities that help a group work on its task. By performing one or many of these functions, any member of a group can help the group determine the exact nature of its problem and work toward its solution. When any of these functions are omitted, the effectiveness of the group declines.

The following are some of these task functions:

*INITIATING:* Helping the group get started by proposing tasks or goals; defining a group problem; suggesting a procedure or idea for solving a problem.

*INFORMATION/OPINION SEEKING:* Requesting facts, asking for clarification of statements that have been made; trying to help the group find out what persons think or feel about what is being discussed; seeking suggestions or ideas.

*INFORMATION/OPINION GIVING:* Offering facts or additional useful information; expressing what one thinks or feels; giving suggestions or ideas.

*CLARIFYING/ELABORATING:* Interpreting or reflecting ideas and suggestions; clearing up points of confusion; offering examples to help the group imagine how a proposal would work if adopted; distinguishing alternatives of issues before the group.

*SUMMARIZING:* Pulling together related ideas; restating suggestions after a group has discussed them; organizing ideas so that the group will know what has been said.

*SETTING OBJECTIVES:* Expressing objectives for the group to achieve; applying standards in evaluation; measuring accomplishments against goals.

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*TESTING WORKABILITY:* Applying suggestions to real situations, so that groups can examine the practicality and workability of ideas.

*CONSENSUS CHECKING:* Sending up "trial balloons" to see if the group is nearing conclusion; checking to see how much agreement has been reached.

## Maintenance-Related Functions

Maintenance-related functions are activities that maintain or build the morale or spirit of a group. These activities help the members of the group work together so that they develop a loyalty to one another and to the group and its task. When these functions are omitted, the effectiveness of the group declines.

The following are some of these maintenance functions:

*GATE-KEEPING:* Attempting to keep communication channels open; making it possible for others to make their contributions to the group; suggesting procedures for better sharing in the discussion.

*WILLINGNESS TO CHANGE:* When your ideas or status is involved, offer to change your position in the group for the sake of goals; admitting error, disciplining oneself in order to maintain group unity and win decisions.

*HARMONIZING:* Attempting to reconcile disagreements; trying to provide common ground compromises for opposing points of view so the group can continue to work; getting people to explore their similarities, as well as differences.

*RELIEVING TENSIONS:* Draining off negative feelings by jesting or pouring oil on troubled waters; putting tense situations in wider context.

*ENCOURAGING:* Being friendly, warm and responsive to others and their contributions; helping others to contribute; listening with interest and concern; reinforcing others participation.

*DIAGNOSING:* Determining and publishing sources of difficulty; seeking appropriate steps to take next.

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## Disruptive Related Functions

Normally these roles or functions occur in the group while it is in a developmental stage and are attempted by members of a group to satisfy their own individual needs. In the process they block progress toward group goals or loyalty to the group or its task.

The following are some of these disruptive functions:

*BLOCKING:* Being negativistic and stubbornly resistant; disagreeing and opposing without or beyond "reasons"; attempting to maintain or bring back an issue after the group has rejected or bypassed it.

*ATTACK:* Deflating the status of others; expressing disapproval of the values, acts, or feelings of others; attacking the group, the leader or the problem it is working on; joking aggressively; showing envy toward another's contribution by trying to take credit for it.

*BEING A PLAYBOY:* Displaying lack of involvement in a group's processes by cynicism, nonchalance, horseplay.

*RECOGNITION-SEEKING:* Boasting; reporting on personal achievements; acting in unusual ways; struggling to prevent being placed in an "inferior" position.

*DESERTER:* Withdraws in some way, is indifferent, silent, aloof, excessively formal, day dreams, deliberately talks about own experiences when unrelated to discussion of group.

*PLEADING SPECIAL INTERESTS:* Speaking for the "grass roots" the "community," the "poor children," etc., usually cloaking one's own prejudices or biases in the stereotype which best fits his/her individual needs.

*DOMINATING:* Asserting power or superiority to manipulate the group or certain members of the group by flattery; asserting a superior status or right to attention; giving directions autocratically; interrupting the contributions of others.

## Functional Roles of Group Facilitators

An effective group facilitator will encourage members of the group to assume leadership responsibilities. The following are some of the important facilitating roles:

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*ORGANIZER:* Someone has to be the prime mover. The first order of business might be for the group to select a leader, but the organizer has performed a leadership function by getting things to that point.

*GOAL-SETTER:* It may be that the goals of the group have already been established -- they may have been assigned previously. Or the goals may be set by the members themselves. In any case, someone must make sure that everyone knows the direction and the expected outcome. If there is disagreement about the goals, that should be the first subject for discussion. Once they have been established, the goal setter articulates them for the group.

*SUMMARIZER:* Because group discussion is a free wheeling communication experience, capsulizing the individual contributions may be a problem. When a great many ideas have been offered, it is easy to forget what they were, and for misunderstandings to occur. Members may have different interpretations of what has been said. The summarizer periodically paraphrases what he/she feels has been said to make certain all the others heard it the same way.

*QUESTIONER:* The questioner plays a leadership role that causes people to think. He/she is the analyzer, the one who dissects the problem and exposes its component. The questioner may also be the one who draws out important information from the member who is silent and needs encouragement. This person can refresh the memory of people who have temporarily forgotten information that may be important. The questioner may stimulate members to do more research for the following meeting. And if questions are asked in a logical sequence, he/she may provide continually to the discussion.

*NAVIGATOR:* Like ships in a storm, groups have a tendency to get blown off course. The navigator keeps one eye on the compass and the other eye on the goals. He/she will tell the group if it is getting off the subject. It may be that the tangent is more important than the original goal; in this case it might be necessary to set new goals. The navigator tries to see that the group arrives at the point it intended to reach.

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*ASSIGNMENT-MAKER:* This is a job that calls for the ability to recognize individual talents. Frequently members of a group are reluctant to volunteer for anything. They may be willing and able to perform a given task, but they need someone to ask them to do it. Often they will decline initially, so the assignment-maker must know how much encouragement should be given and how much pressure can be applied.

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# INTERVENTION AND GROUP LEADERSHIP

What should the facilitator do when he/she intervenes? To help answer this question, descriptions of several types of intervention follow.

1. CONTENT FOCUS. If the group is discussing a topic such as "How is ongoing assessment of pupil ability displayed?" A content intervention would be to share an experience, some research data, or an opinion.

   *Comment:* *A content intervention may give legitimacy to the topic and may keep the group from looking at its own processes. In a task group where the focus is on content, the content intervention may contribute to group goals. The leader should encourage contributions from the group members.*

2. PROCESS FOCUS. This intervention attempts to shift the focus to what is happening in the group. One of the most standard among facilitators is, "I wonder what is really going on in the group now." Others would prefer, "Were you aware that only two persons voiced an opinion yet a decision was made?"

   *Comment:* *How a facilitator helps the group focus on its own processes is probably determined by his/her personal style or leadership strategy.*

3. ASKING FOR FEELINGS. An intervention of this type would be, "Ed, how did you feel when the group rejected your idea?"

   *Comment:* *Some facilitators and many participants find the sharing of feelings the most interesting part of the group experience. For some, it is the first time they have been able to find out how others view their behavior. Certainly this is an important learning goal. However, if the leader concentrates on this, he/she may neglect other important facets of group action.*

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4. DIRECTION GIVING. The facilitator may structure the group by having members write out name cards, make up assignments, or stop at some given time. Later, he/she may provide observation forms or even suggest an exercise.

   Comment: *Some facilitators offer direction only as suggestions, while others impose certain arbitrary actions to see how the group handles "forced" directions.*

   *It would appear that if a facilitator has high needs to control he/she may satisfy these needs by direction giving. Or, the facilitator may recognize this problem and over-compensate by not supplying directions beneficial to the group's needs.*

   *The facilitator has to decide when to let the group work through its own impasse (at the cost of time wasted) or to give directions (at the risk of reinforcing dependency). Relevant factors include the length of the groups' experience together, the level of dependency, the resources available to the group, and the facilitator's own tolerance of ambiguity.*

5. DIRECT FEEDBACK. The facilitators may give direct feedback to a member or to the group.

   Comment: *Some facilitators give direct feedback early, both as a model and to legitimize the giving of feedback. Others prefer to wait until they have worked through some of the authority problems. The facilitator is faced with a dilemma. Group members are often anxious to know how the facilitator sees them. However, the reactions of the facilitator are often no more valid than those of other group members. The facilitator must somehow share his/her reactions and, at the same time, get the group to use data from all members.*

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6. COGNITIVE ORIENTATIONS. The facilitator may provide relevant "theory" or information.

   Comment: *Will the participants learn more if they can "glean" the same insight from their own experience (and is the facilitator really satisfying his/her own need to be seen as an expert)?*

7. PERFORMING GROUP FUNCTIONS. The facilitator may intervene by performing task-maintenance functions to help the group maintain itself as an effective system and accomplish its task.

   Comment: *The facilitator may intervene with such task functions as seeking opinions or reactions to what has happened in the group. He/she may share his/her own opinion or initiate a new group goal, a definition of the problem, or a way of organizing for work. He/she may elaborate an idea, summarize, and/or test consensus. To meet maintenance needs, the facilitator should intervene by encouraging, harmonizing, "gate keeping," standard setting, or releasing tension.*

8. INDIVIDUAL ROLES. To satisfy individual needs, group members sometimes act as aggressor, blocker, recognition seeker, self-confessor, playboy, dominator, etc. Facilitators may intervene at times in this manner, but it is questionable whether such interventions facilitate the objectives of group members.

   Comment: *Some strategy calls for intervening in "task-maintenance" areas until members develop greater ability to perform such functions.*

9. EXPLORATORY INTERVENTION. The facilitator may diagnose what he/she sees happening. For example, "There are a number of possibilities why the group is apathetic. One is that our goals are not clear. Another is that we are afraid to start to work because old conflicts may be reopened." He/she may then ask the group for other possibilities.

   Comment: *The exploratory intervention is designed to suggest ways of looking at process and to encourage a diagnostic approach.*

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10. PROTECTION INTERVENTION. The facilitator may intervene to keep members from "overexposure," that is, hearing personal incidents or feelings that may not facilitate learnings or outcomes appropriate to the group's goal or that may create a situation neither members nor facilitator is capable of dealing with.

A facilitator may also protect a member if he/she feels that feedback is ill-timed, unnecessarily severe, etc. Or the facilitator may help a member maintain his/her identify despite group pressures to conform.

> Comment: *Some facilitators prefer to focus on process and ask the group if given behavior seems appropriate to their goals.*

11. Once the goals have been set, instead of asking the question, "Where are we?" ask:

    (a) Are we analyzing the problem?
    (b) Are we suggesting solutions?
    (c) Are we testing ideas?
    (d) How fast are we moving? If bogged down, how, why, what?
    (e) Are we using the best method of work?
    (f) What is the identifiable level of improvement in our ability to work together?
    (g) What are our expectations of one another, of self? (independence, interdependence, dependence)
    (h) What additional information/resources are needed, from whom? by when?

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# INDIRECT AND DIRECT COMMUNICATION

## (Questioning Techniques)

One basic focus of group dynamics is on the effective utilization of communication. Many people fear taking risks in interpersonal relationships, yet since they need to feel that they are articulate and adept at "communication," they often engage in what we can call "pseudo communication."

In reality, they try to direct the risk of interpersonal communication away from themselves. They fear to present their own opinions, ideas, feelings, desires.

The individual who fears taking risks may want to manipulate others fulfilling his/her own desires or expectations. Thus, he/she would be saved from being rejected or from exposing his/her vulnerability to others. His/her motives may also be to control others without apparently assuming authority.

This paper attempts to illustrate several common varieties of indirect, "pseudo" communication and to suggest some alternatives to these patterns of communication.

### Noncommunication

One way that people engage in noncommunicative discourse is by speaking as if they represented other people, in an attempt to get illegitimate support for their points of view. For example, a person who prefaces remarks by saying, "I agree with Fred when he says . . ." or "I think I speak for the group when I say . . ." is not communicating. He/she is simply attempting to borrow legitimacy.

### Pseudo Questions

Perhaps the most frequently misused communication pattern is the question. In fact, most questions are pseudo questions. The questioner is not really seeking information or an answer to the "question." Rather, he/she is offering an "opinion statement." Since the questioner does not want to risk having the idea rejected, the "opinion statement" is framed as a question, hoping to maneuver the other person into agreement.

With few exceptions we could eliminate all questions from our communications with others. Since most questions are indirect forms of communications, they could be recast as statements or direct communication. By replacing pseudo questions with genuine statements, we would come much closer to actual communication with each other.

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Before we can achieve the aim of direct communication, we must be able to identify the varieties of pseudo questions that people tend to use. There are eight basic types of pseudo questions. Specific examples of each of these types of indirect communication are noted.

Co-optive question. This pseudo question attempts to narrow or limit the possible responses of the other person. "Don't you think that . . .?" is a classic example of this type. Or, "Isn't it true that . . .?"; "Wouldn't you rather . . .?"; "Don't you want to . . .?"; "You wouldn't want that, would you?" The questioner is attempting to elicit the response he/she wanted by building certain restrictions into the question.

Punitive question. When using a punitive question, the questioner really wants to expose the other individual without appearing to do so directly. For example, a person may be proposing a new theoretical model in training and the listener knowing that the theory has not been properly researched may ask what the experimental evidence indicates. The purpose of the questioner is not to obtain information but to punish the speaker by putting him/her on the spot.

Hypothetical question. In asking a hypothetical question, a person again resorts to a pseudo question. "If you were in charge of the meeting, wouldn't you handle it differently?" He/she does not actually want to know how the individual would handle it. The questioner may wish to criticize the meeting, or be indirectly probing for an answer to a question he/she is afraid or reluctant to ask. Hypothetical questions typically begin with "If," What if," or "How about."

Imperative question. Another type of pseudo question is the one that actually makes a demand. A question such as "Have you done anything about . . .?" or "When are you going to . . .?" is not asking for information. Rather it implies a command: "Do what you said you were going to do and do it soon." The questioner wants to impress the other person with the urgency or importance of the request (command).

Screened question. The screened question is a very common variety of pseudo question. The questioner, afraid of simply stating his/her own choice of preference, asks the other person what he/she likes or what he/she wants to do, hoping the choice will be what the questioner secretly wants.

For example, two acquaintances decide to go out to dinner together. One individual, afraid to take the risk of making a suggestion that might not be accepted, resorts to a screened question: "What kind of food do you prefer?" Secretly the individual hopes the other person will name his/her own favorite food, say Chinese. Both questions screen an actual statement of choice, which the questioner fears to make: "I would like to have Chinese food."

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One result of the screened question is that the questioner may get information he/she is not seeking. If the other person misinterprets the question about what kind of food is preferred, for example, he/she may tell the questioner about exotic varieties of food experienced in his/her travels -- not what the questioner wanted to know at all.

Set-up question. This pseudo question maneuvers the other person into a vulnerable position, ready for the axe to fall. One example of the set-up question is "Is it fair to say that you . . .?" If the person being questioned agrees that it is fair, the questioner has him "set-up" for the kill. Another way set-up questions are introduced is by the phrase "Would you agree . . .?" The questioner is "leading the witness" in much the same way a skillful lawyer sets up a line of response in court.

Rhetorical question. One of the simplest types of the pseudo question is the rhetorical question, which comes in many forms. The speaker may make a statement and immediately follow it with a positive phrase that assumes approval in advance: "Right?" or "OK?" or "You see?" or "You know?" The speaker is not asking the other person to respond; indeed he/she wishes to forestall a response because of fears that it may not be favorable. Often, an insecure person may acquire the habit of ending almost all his/her statements with "Right?" as an attempted guarantee of agreement.

Or the questioner may precede statements or requests with such negative phrases as "Don't you think . . .?"; "Isn't it true that . . .?"; "Wouldn't you like?" In either case, the individual who fears risking his/her own opinion is trying to eliminate all alternatives by framing the "question" so that it elicits the response he/she wants.

A supervisor may say to a staff member, "Don't you think it would be a good idea to finish the report tonight and have it out of the way?" The question is phrased as if the decision to work late was a joint one. The staff member may not approve of the suggestion, but he/she has little or no alternative but to agree.

"Gotcha" question. A "gotcha" question is derived from Eric Berne's "Games People Play" 1964: "Now I gotcha you son-of-a-bitch." Related to the set-up question, a "gotcha" question might run something like this: "Weren't you the one who . . .?"; "Didn't you say that . . .?"; "Didn't I see you . . .?" The questioner's joy in trapping the other person is fairly palpable. He/she does not want an "answer" to the question, the questioner wants to dig a pit for the respondent to fall into.

Game-playing behavior. Further, indirect communication encourages people to "play games" with each other: to deceive, to be dishonest, not to be open or straight-forward. Clearly, such behavior leads away from the basic aims of task group training. When the questioner is playing a "gotcha" game, for example, the behavior may be contagious.

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## Defensiveness

One of the surest effects of indirect communication is defensiveness. Since there is an implied threat behind a great deal of indirect communication, individuals tend to become wary when faced with it. Their need to defend themselves only widens the gap of effective communication even further.

Defensiveness can be recognized in several different postures, all characteristic results of indirect communication: displacement, denial, projection, attribution, and deflection.

## Direct (Effective) Communication

In contrast to indirect (ineffective) communication, direct (effective) communication is marked by the capacity for taking certain risks in order to understand and be understood.

## Characteristics

Communication is effective when it has certain characteristics. It is two-way communication, with ideas, opinions, values, attitudes, beliefs, and feelings flowing freely from one individual to another.

It is marked by active listening, by people taking responsibility for what they hear -- accepting, clarifying, and checking the meaning, content and intent of what the other person says.

It utilizes effective feedback. Not only does each person listen actively, each person also responds to the other individual by telling that person what he/she thinks the other person said. The process of feedback tests whether what was heard is what was intended.

It is not stressful. Communication is not effective if people are concerned that they are not communicating; when this happens, it is a key that the communication is not functioning properly.

It is clear and unencumbered by mixed or contradictory messages (verbal, nonverbal, or symbolic) that serve to confuse the content of the communication. In other words, it is direct.

Any communication always carries two kinds of meanings: the content message and the relationship message. We not only hear what other people say to us, we also hear implications about our mutual relationship. If we are so preoccupied with detecting cues about the latter, we may distort the content message severely or lose it altogether. When communication is effective, both messages are clearly discernible; one does not confuse or distract the other.

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## Approaches

Confrontation is one of five major approaches that can foster direct communication. Each person can learn to confront the other in a declarative rather than in an interrogative manner. We can attempt to eliminate almost all pseudo questions by formulating them into direct statements.

Active listening can be encouraged. This is a powerful antidote to indirect communication. We can learn to paraphrase, empathize, reflect feelings, test the accuracy of our inferences, and check our assumptions in order to produce clearer, more straightforward communication with others.

Owning is a third means of fostering direct communication. If individuals can learn to accept their legitimate feelings, data, attitudes, behavior, responsibility, etc., then they can learn to reveal themselves more directly to other people. Owning what we are, what we are feeling, and what belongs to us is a first step toward communicating more effectively.

Locating, a fourth approach toward direct communication, is a way of finding the context of a question. Some questions we cannot answer because we do not know their "environment," so to speak. We need to learn to locate these questions before we can respond to them. Questions are usually more effective if they are preceded by an explanation of where they are "coming from."

Sharing is the final, and perhaps the most important point, directing us toward effective communication. All communication is a sharing process: In attempting to communicate with others, we are sharing our views, beliefs, thoughts, values, observations, intentions, doubts, wants, interests, assumptions, strengths, and weaknesses.

For any of these approaches to be useful, we must, as we indicated earlier, be ready to take risks and to work toward a genuine sharing of a common meaning with the other person. If we are not prepared to risk, we will not attain successful, effective, direct communication.

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KEYS TO BETTER LISTENING

1. *Rephrase what you heard* - so that you and the speaker will be certain that you understood.

2. *Pay attention* - Keep your mind on what the speaker is saying. Think about your own problems when you are alone.

3. *Shun preconceived ideas* - The person who won't believe something because it is contrary to what he/she "always knew" or closes his/her mind to fresh, and often vital, information.

4. *Discipline yourself* - Don't let anger or sympathy prevent you from understanding a statement.

5. *Don't interrupt* - The "open mouth" listener who must say something each time the speaker catches his/her breath is not listening full time.

6. *Learn to concentrate* - In long meetings, boredom and wool-gathering can become problems. One speaker bores you so you stop listening and miss important points that come up later.

7. *Listen for the unfamiliar* - A common fault is failure to pay attention to a speaker because you think you've heard it before. By listening carefully for just one new item or a different arrangement of facts, you can overcome the tendency to disregard the entire message.

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## PRINCIPLES FOR "BRAINSTORMING"

1. You will be more productive of ideas if you will refrain from evaluating them or discussing them at the time they are proposed. This is important because education and experience have trained most of us to think judgmentally. By deferring judgment on your ideas, you can think up far more alternatives from which you can choose later.

2. Group production of ideas can be more productive than separate, individual production of ideas. Experiments in group thinking have demonstrated that the average participant in this form of creative "togetherness" can think up twice as many possible solutions as when working alone.

3. The more ideas you think up the better. In problem solving of almost any type, you are far more likely to choose the right path toward solution if you think up 10 ideas by way of possible alternatives instead of only two or three.

************************************

## PROCEDURES FOR "BRAINSTORMING"

### First Phase: Production of Ideas

a. All critical judgment is ruled out. Ideas, not critical analysis, are desired at this stage.

b. Wild ideas are expected in the spontaneity which comes when judgment is suspended. Practical considerations are not of importance at this point.

c. Quantity of ideas count here, not quality.

d. The ideas of other brainstormers should be built upon wherever possible. Pool your wildness.

### Second Phase: Evaluation of Ideas

a. Ideas should be critically reviewed and best judgment applied.

b. Clues to something sound in the wildest idea should be sought after.

c. Priorities should be selected for reporting to the decision making person or group.

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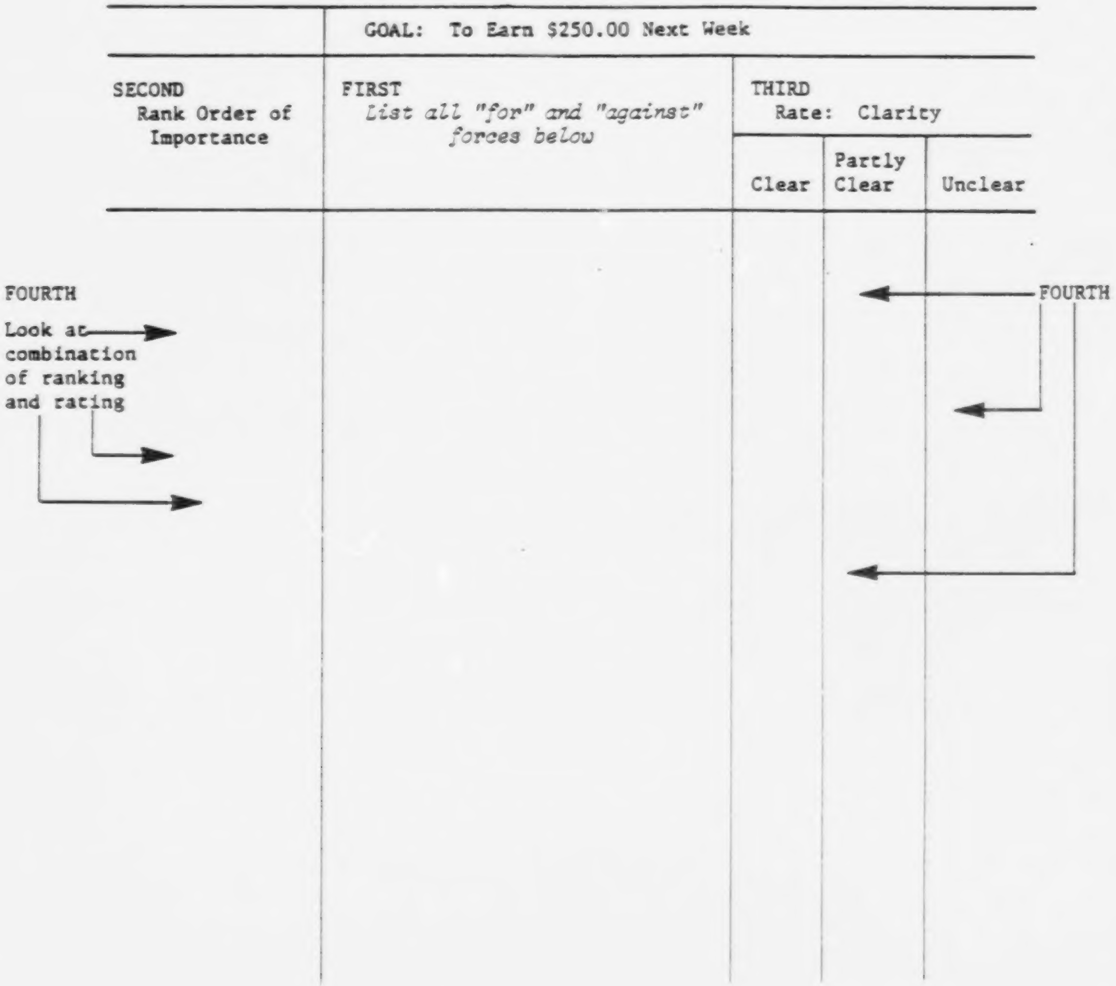
## FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS

Paper 12

In the early stages of problem solving, primary concern should be for gaining a clear diagnostic understanding of the situation which exists "now." The force field technique provides a diagrammatic picture of the forces that maintain a situation at any given moment. When you write a force field on a piece of paper, it probably indicates only a few of the actual complex sets of forces operating in the situation that concern you. You might feel very sure that the forces you have listed are important ones, but have little data to support your belief or to give you a usable understanding of just how these forces are operating. Your force field can be analyzed to consider which forces might profitably be investigated in more objective detail.

Here is an illustration of a completed force field analysis. Instructions for doing the analysis follow.


GOAL: To Earn $250.00 Next Week
SECOND
Rank Order of Importance
FIRST
List all "for" and "against" forces below
THIRD
Rate: Clarity
Clear
Partly Clear
Unclear
FOURTH
Look at combination of ranking and rating
FOURTH

FIRST, produce one list from your "for" and "against" forces. The force field analysis treats all the forces--for and against--as one list.

SECOND, numerically order these according to their importance in achieving your goal. Importance is defined in terms of the degree to which change of a particular force would cause the situation to move most toward your goal. Change may be defined as altering a situation in any or all of the following four ways:

1. Adding a force
2. Eliminating a force
3. Strengthening a force
4. Weakening a force

You would, therefore, rank as number one that force which you believe, if changed in any of the four ways, would result in the most movement toward the desired goal. Force number two would be that which you believe, if changed, would yield the second most movement toward the goal. Continue in this manner until you have rank ordered all of the forces for and against movement toward the goal.

THIRD, each force in terms of clarity. Look at your statement of a force. How clear are you that it really is a force...examine each statement in terms of being able to show objective data about its importance, who is involved in it, exactly how and why it is operating. Clarity is not a matter of being positive in your own belief. Sometimes, being "positive" is being wrong in a loud voice. Clarity is defined here as having objective data with which you could stand up in court and prove your case for this actually being the force you say it is beyond a shadow of a doubt. Rate each force as to whether you are clear, partly clear or unclear about it in these terms.

FOURTH, look at the combination of ranking and rating. Forces which have a high ranking of importance, but which you are unclear about, are obvious candidates for further exploration. Your ranking and rating analysis will help you identify those skills you need to acquire or increase in order to improve your own group work.

In this workshop you will use your force field analysis to help you identify and prioritize skills you need to acquire or increase. This will help you improve the situation within your group.

Turn the page and use the form provided to analyze your force field.

# FOUR GUIDELINES FOR WRITING A PROBLEM STATEMENT

Paper 9

Suppose that I said to you, "We have a communication problem among our faculty. What would you suggest we do about it?" You would undoubtedly want to ask many questions before hazarding an action suggestion. What is it that is not being communicated? Who feels the need for such communication? Why isn't this communication taking place? Specifically, who would need to be communicating what to whom to improve the problem situation?

A good problem statement includes answers to such questions. It is a brief, specific statement about a problem situation. A problem situation exists when there is a difference between the way things are and the way someone would like them to be. The word "problem" tends to suggest a negative meaning to most of us. The definition used here can be applied to situations that we feel negative about. It also applies to situations that are not thought of as negative ones. The situation might be generally good now and an accomplishment of a new objective could make it even better. You might have a station wagon that satisfies your family's basic needs and feel that having a sports car too would make things even better.

Using the definition of a problem situation as one where there is discrepancy between the way things are now and the way someone would like them to be implies that there are almost always "problems" that could be worked on. There are almost always improvement goals in education that we would like to be working toward.

One of the greatest barriers to working constructively toward achieving improvement goals is lack of specificity in stating the problem. Problem statements are constructed from a description of a problem situation. Compare the two following efforts to state a problem.

> We have a communication problem among our faculty.
>
> We use team teaching in our building. Virtually all of us involved in teams are concerned that we haven't given adequate attention to creating ways to share innovative ideas across teams. We need ways of sharing that don't take up the time of those to whom a particular idea is not relevant, but that share enough detail to give interested people enough information to try it out in their own setting.

The latter statement covers four points that are suggested as guidelines for writing a good problem statement. It answers each of these guideline questions:

1. Who is affected? Members of the teaching teams are affected. "Virtually all of us involved in teams are concerned...."

2. Who is causing it? The members of the teaching teams seem to see themselves as mainly responsible. "...we haven't given adequate attention...."

3. What kind of a problem is it? Note that the reason for the problem is a lack of adequate means for doing something. "We need ways of sharing...."

4. What is the goal for improvement? Specifically, how will things look when the goal has been achieved? In this case, it has been made clear that the goal is not simply increased communications. The goal is creation of "...ways of sharing that don't take up time of those to whom a particular idea is not relevant, but that share enough detail to give interested people enough information to try it out in their own setting."

The most important guideline for writing a good problem statement is inclusion of a specific goal for improvement. Two kinds of confusion can arise when you are attempting to describe the goal for improvement in your statement. One relates to the fact that there may be many possible major and minor goals in the problem situation. It might require many, many pages of writing to describe the entire problem situation. Describing the problem situation is not the same as writing a problem statement. A problem statement answers the four guideline questions in focusing on one, specific improvement goal within the problem situation.

The second kind of confusion arises from needing to be specific in writing the problem statement, while at the same time being ready to change the statement any time new understandings of the problem situation indicate that you should do so. In the early stages of working on a problem, I may have quite erroneous ideas about what kind of problem it is or what the improvement goal should be. By stating specifically what I think is the case, I'll know what to explore. I will be clear about what to change in the statement any time new information shows my initial ideas were wrong. The problem statement should be as specific as possible, but always open to change in the light of new understanding.

## Four Guidelines

Following are some considerations that can help you to be specific as you respond to the four guideline questions while writing a problem statement:

1. Who is affected? Consider these possibilities before deciding what you want to say about this. Is it you?

Is it one other person? Is it a small group of people? Is it an entire organization? Is it the community or society at large?

2. Who is causing it? We frequently speak of problems as though they were caused by circumstances that didn't relate directly to people. This is rarely the case. There is usually some person or persons who could influence things to be different. Consider the same possiblities as above. Is it you? Is it one other person? Is it a small group of people? Is it an entire organization? Is it the community or society at large?

3. What kind of a problem is it? There are many ways to classify kinds of problems. The following considerations may prove helpful:

    There is a lack of clarity or disagreement about goals.

    There is lack of clarity or disagreement about the means of achieving goals.

    There is a lack of skills needed to carry out a particular means.

    There is a lack of material resources.

    There is inaccurate communication.

    There is too little or too much communication.

    People have a different understanding of the same thing.

    There is insufficient time or schedules don't coincide.

    Roles are lacking or inappropriate.

    Norms are restrictive, unclear or misinterpreted.

    There are conflicts of ideology.

    There is a lack of clarity or a conflict about decision making, e.g., power struggles.

    Expression of feelings is inappropriate or inadequate.

    There is conflict related to individual differences.

4. What is the goal for improvement? Ideally, this should be stated so clearly that anyone reading your statement would know how to determine when the goal is reached. It would tell exactly who would be doing what, where, how and to what extent. Until you know where you are going, it's very difficult to make and carry out plans to get there. The more clear you are about your intended target at any given time, the more likely you will be to recognize that it is an incorrect target should this prove to be the case.

Problem Situation

Choose a situation that dissatisfies you.

1. Write here the situation, stating the difference between the way you think things are now and the way you think things should be.

Problem Statement

2. Write your statement of problem, basing it on the problem situation you have written, by answering the following questions:

    a. Who is affected by the unsatisfactory situation?

b. Who is causing, or is responsible for, the unsatisfactory situation?

c. What kind of a problem is posed by the dissatisfaction?

d. How will things look when the situation is improved (what is your improvement goal)?

Write a paragraph that incorporates the answers to the form questions above. In the paragraph say enough about the situation to communicate to another person. Now you have a problem statement.

3. Make some guesses about what skills _you_ will need to contribute to achieving this goal. Make your list descriptive, e.g., how to build an agenda, how to implement decisions, how to report feelings. (_Write on the back of this page_.)

# PLANNING QUESTIONS

What is the present situation?
Who says it's a problem?
What will happen if nothing is done?

What do I want the situation to be in the future?
How will I know when I have achieved it?

What are all the possible ways to solve the problem?
What resources would be needed to do each alternative?
Which alternatives are most feasible?
Who needs to be involved in choosing which way is best?

What arrangements need to be made with other organizations and people to carry out the plan?
How will we get everything done on schedule?
How will the needed resources be found?

How will I know when I've reached my objectives?
How well did the strategies and activities work out?
How efficiently were the resources used?

What will I do with this information?
Who needs to receive it?
How can I make it possible for others to use this information?

What is the organization's capacity for change?
How do organizations change?
What problems will I face in introducing my plan?
How can I get my plan accepted?

# Checklist for Consideration of Resource Needs

| ⇩<br>RESOURCE | **Needed Resource** Is this resource needed for this strategy? Yes/No | **Resource Available** Is it possible to divert resources to this strategy? Yes/No | **Resource Not Available** Is it possible to acquire this resource elsewhere? Yes/No |
|---|---|---|---|
| Personnel | | | |
| Money | | | |
| Equipment | | | |
| Facilities | | | |
| Time | | | |
| Knowledge | | | |
| Skill | | | |
| Political Influence | | | |
| Prestige (Reputation) | | | |
| Legitimacy | | | |
| Energy | | | |
| Control over Information | | | |

## 1.

## SCHED-U-GRAPH® Technique

This is a simple tool for scheduling activities and projects, developed by the Sperry Rand Corporation. The instrument is a chart (24" x 42") containing pockets for 3" x 5" cards. The horizontal portion of the chart is labeled by month and the specific activities or tasks are typed on 3" x 5" cards and inserted in the appropriate slots.

For example, if you were preparing a budget for presentation to the Board of Directors in November, you would identify the various activities or duties involved and the approximate time to begin and complete them.

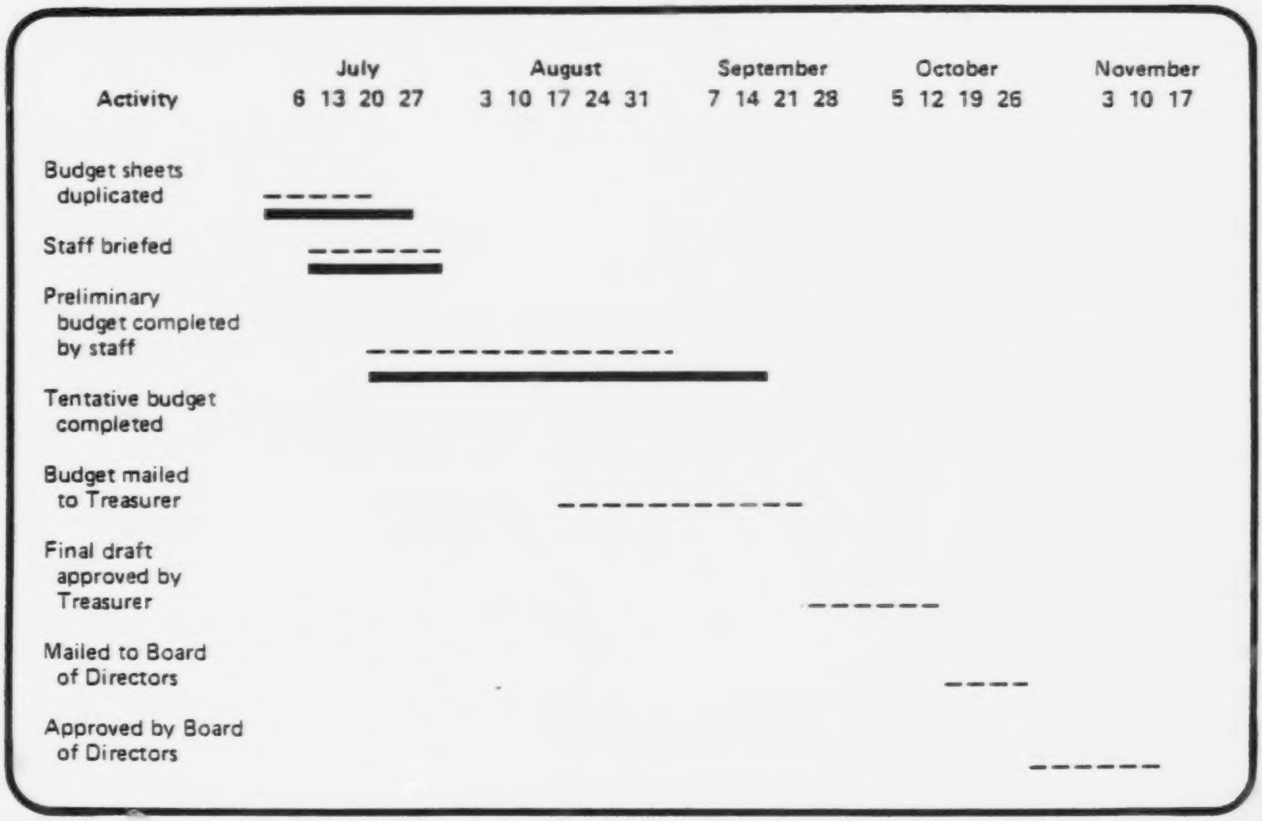
| JULY | AUG. | SEPT. | OCT. | NOV. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Budget sheets duplicated | Preliminary budget completed by staff | Tentative budget completed; mail budget to Treasurer | Final draft approved by Treasurer; mail to Board of Directors | Approval by Board of Directors |

This technique helps you see what needs to be done in a general time frame, but it has some weaknesses. It is difficult to determine the time needed to complete the tasks, and you may schedule more tasks than can be accomplished during any one particular month. Furthermore, it is impossible to show any relationship among the various activities and tasks.

SCHED-U-GRAPH is a registered trademark of the Sperry Rand Corporation.

## 2. Gantt Scheduling

In this method, a bar chart is used to reflect completion dates and activities. Horizontal dotted lines are drawn so their lengths are proportional to the planned duration of each activity. Progress on each activity is monitored by drawing solid lines parallel to and below the dotted lines to show actual duration for completed activities.

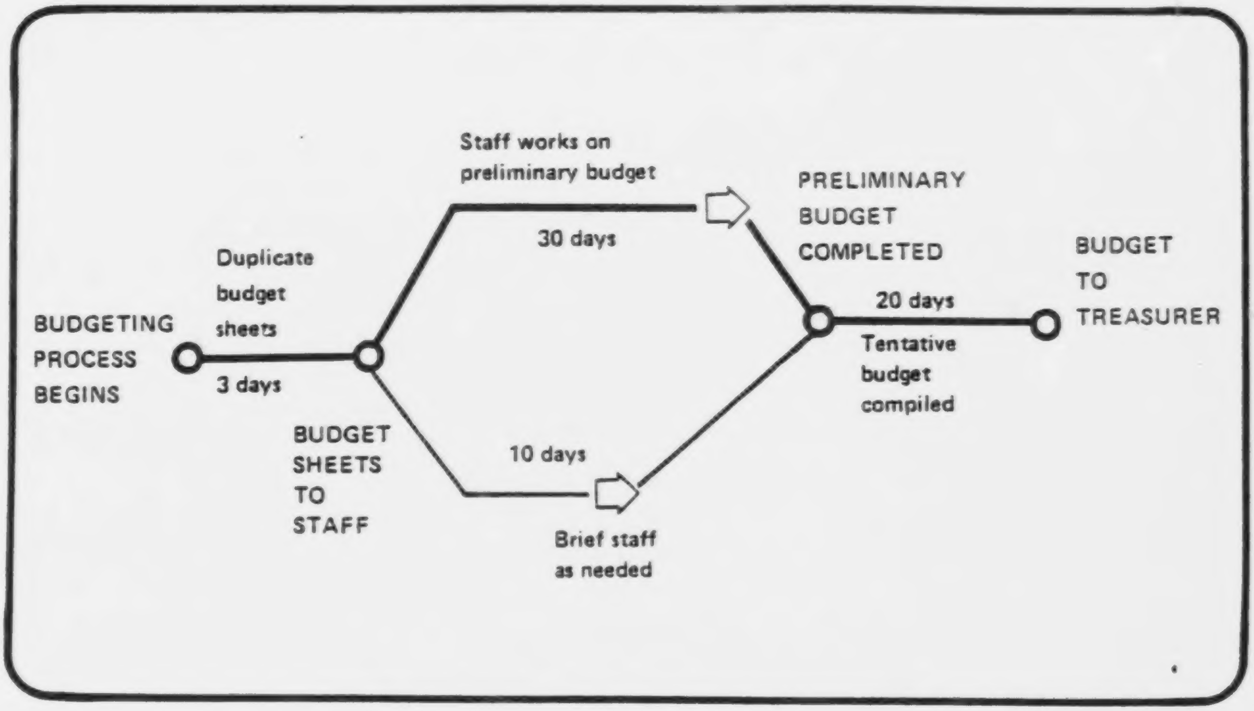


Activities are listed in the first column on the left. To use the Gantt technique in the "forward direction" you work from left to right, plotting activities as they must occur over time in relation to other activities and establishing a completion date for the job. Still, the relationships between the various activities are not completely clear.

## 3.

## PERT Chart*

PERT-charting is a more sophisticated technique, developed by the U.S. government for keeping track of such intricate processes as building submarines. This technique is used when it is necessary for many tasks to be accomplished in sequence and in the shortest possible time. It is a technique well-suited to group planning, where cooperation is essential to get many tasks done by a given deadline.


BUDGETING PROCESS BEGINS
Duplicate budget sheets
3 days
BUDGET SHEETS TO STAFF
Staff works on preliminary budget
30 days
10 days
Brief staff as needed
PRELIMINARY BUDGET COMPLETED
20 days
Tentative budget compiled
BUDGET TO TREASURER

The PERT chart identifies *activities*, which culminate in *events*. Working backward from the final deadline, the time needed for each activity is calculated, and deadlines are scheduled for each event. By showing activities that can occur simultaneously and those that must occur in sequence, the chart reveals a *critical path*, which is the overall time needed to complete the project. An advantage of PERT is that it helps the group members focus their energies on critical tasks and continually re-evaluate the process to see if they are on schedule.

A simple PERT chart is illustrated above, with the critical path shown as a heavy line.

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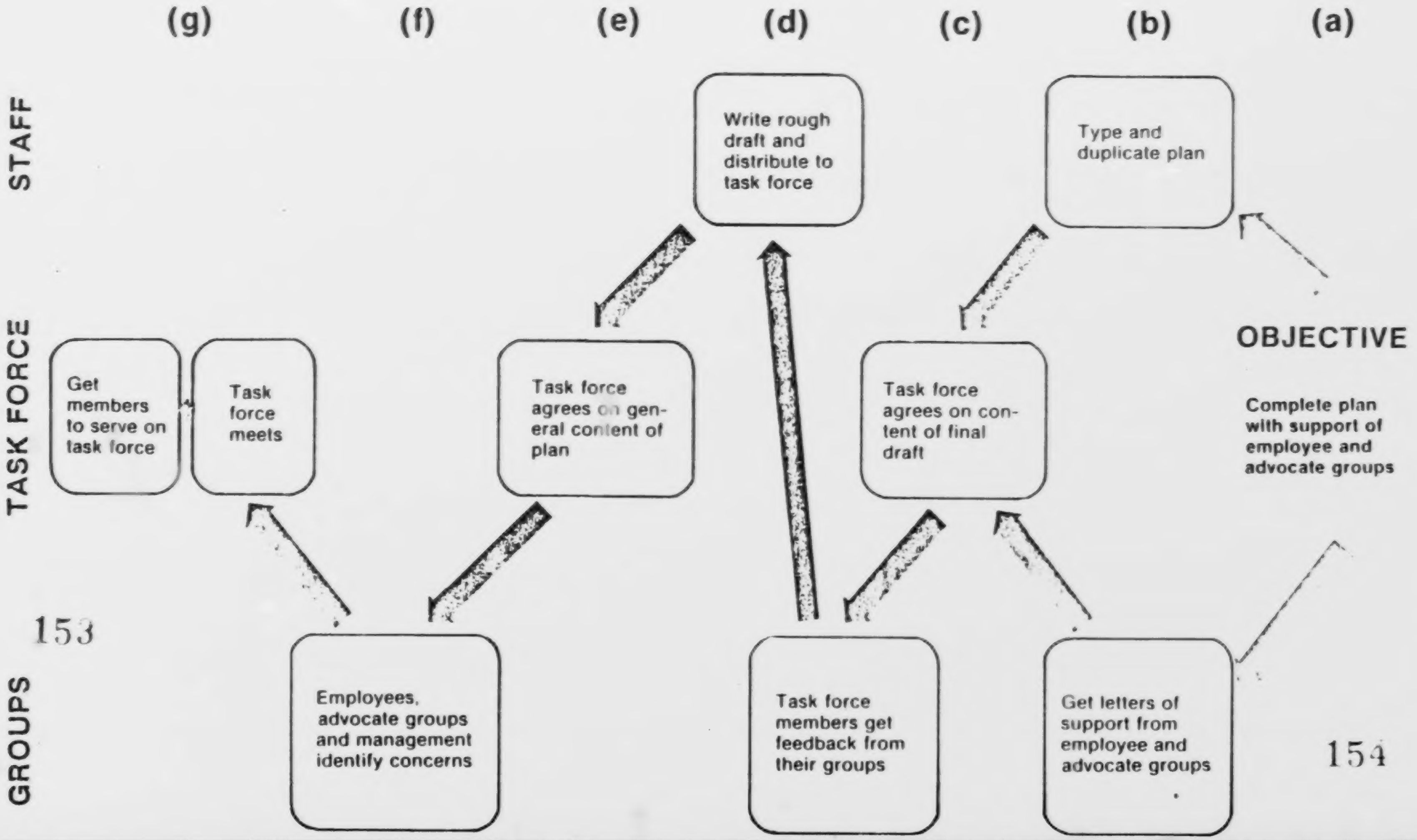
*PERT stands for Program Evaluation and Review Technique.

# Major Activities Planned to Carry Out Selected Strategy



(g) (f) (e) (d) (c) (b) (a)

**STAFF**

Write rough draft and distribute to task force

Type and duplicate plan

**TASK FORCE**

Get members to serve on task force

Task force meets

Task force agrees on general content of plan

Task force agrees on content of final draft

**OBJECTIVE**

**Complete plan with support of employee and advocate groups**

**GROUPS**

Employees, advocate groups and management identify concerns

Task force members get feedback from their groups

Get letters of support from employee and advocate groups

# Task Planning Sheet

RESPONSIBLE STAFF MEMBER: ____________________

**Your Strategy:**

**Your Activity:**

| TASKS | Why? | When? | Who? | Resources? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

# Give Them the Facts*

When you are telling other people about your plan, either verbally or in writing, use some of the following techniques. Note which ones you have used in other situations and how well they worked for you.

1. ***Explain why***—Provide all the facts about the reason for changing. If there are risks, acknowledge them, but tell why the risks are worth taking. Show what you have done to minimize the risk.
2. ***Name the benefits that could result from the change***—Don't exaggerate, but list them objectively. Not to do so would be like a sales person not telling a customer what the product can do.
3. ***Seek questions and answer them***—This will stop rumors that inevitably arise during an organizational change.
4. ***Invite participation***—Ask for suggestions, because the people involved know the situation best. Changes work out most favorably when those concerned have a part in suggesting the change.
5. ***Avoid surprise***—This stirs unreasoning opposition more than any other factor, because those involved don't have time to think. Their emotions take over, and such emotions are most likely to be negative.
6. ***Acknowledge the rough spots***—In selling an organizational change, we tend to make it sound simple, presenting a clearcut chart and neat lines of responsibility. But even a minor change is rarely simple. Admit it, and tell how you plan to smooth the shift.
7. ***Set standards***—Give a date when you want the change to be completed. Tell what you want it to accomplish. What are the penalties for failure? The rewards for success?
8. ***Contact informal leaders***—Let them know in particular detail what is going on.
9. ***Praise***—People in any new situation are anxious, and positive reinforcement helps.
10. ***Repeat***—To get across something complex you must tell the story over and over, using fresh examples and different approaches.

# Know Your Innovation*

In getting ready to propose an innovation, it is useful to think through in advance how easy or difficult it will be to get people to accept it. Know your innovation, and anticipate questions and concerns that management and staff will have. Use these questions to assess how difficult your sales job will be.

1. What is the cost of implementing this change (including costs in time, money, social status)?
2. What are the potential benefits, in both the short- and long-run, for the organization and individuals?
3. How will the innovation make life easier for people in the organization (by cutting red tape or simplifying paperwork)?
4. How much risk or uncertainty is involved?
5. Whom can you count on for support and opposition inside and outside the organization?
6. How easy is it to communicate what the change is all about?
7. How compatible is this plan with the goals, values, and structure of the organization?
8. How complex are the changes that are involved?
9. Where did this idea come from? (It will help if others are already doing it or if it was proposed by someone respected by people in the organization.)
10. Can the plan be tried out on a small scale first?
11. Can the plan be modified without losing effectiveness? (If it has to be done in a certain precise way, it will be harder for people to accept.)

---

*These questions were formulated by Jesse E. Gordon, Professor of Psychology and Social Work, University of Michigan.

# Review of Evaluative Criteria

| ⇩ STRATEGY | Appropriate Yes/No/Maybe | Adequacy Hi/Med/Low | Effectiveness Hi/Med/Low | Efficiency Hi/Med/Low | Side Effects Good/Bad |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ALTERNATIVE A: | | | | | |
| ALTERNATIVE B: | | | | | |
| ALTERNATIVE C: | | | | | |
| ALTERNATIVE D: | | | | | |

Creative problem-solvers are often faced with the additional problem of communicating what they uncover to others. If you recognize this to be the case, and if you have wondered what to do about it, here's a guide that could help you along.

**COMMUNICATION** involves translating a meaning or definitive message into a medium and through the environment to an intended receiver. The process is affected by many factors.

**THE IMPORTANT DETERMINANTS OF A SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION SEEM TO BE:**

YOU, **THE SENDER** (knowledge and attitudes)

**YOUR ABILITY** TO SHAPE AND SEND MESSAGES OF YOUR MEANINGS (skill)

THE **QUALITY OF THE MESSAGE** (substance and relevance)

THE **MEDIUM** SELECTED

THE **ENVIRONMENT** (external elements that facilitate or block the message)

THE **RECEIVER** (knowledge and attitudes)

THE **RECEIVER'S ABILITY** TO RECEIVE

# Check these factors..

**SENDER AND RECEIVER ABILITIES** (Skills)

Experience, breadth or scope of practice
Preferences related to training
Physical handicaps
Mental blocks
Vocabulary
Awareness; ability to relate to other interests
Propensity to distraction (attention span)

☑

## ☑ SENDER AND RECEIVER

Age, personal relationship to each other, expectation based on experiences
Attitude and potential ramifications or consequences
Beneficial outcome: motives, values needs
Recent experience: uplifts, traumas, sickness, diversions, fatigue, anxiety, etc.
Habits, customs, rituals, taboos, prejudices, biases, assumptions
Education, travel experience, breadth of outlook
Influential aspects: idols, models, aspirations
Areas where influence can be affected
National, religious, racial heritage
Social attitudes, politics
Insecurities and strengths
Specific knowledge of message area
Concurrent focus of attention

## ☑ QUALITY OF THE MESSAGE

Content: completeness
Relevance to receiver familiarity
Facilitates recognition
  clarity
  simplicity
  strength of stimulus
  orderly

## ☑ CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MEDIUM

Potential for sensory stimulation
Appropriateness to message content
Appropriateness to sender's skills, knowledge and attitudes
Within ability of receiver to accept
Energy required
Symbolic characteristics
Speed
Noise (distraction) characteristics

## ☑ THE ENVIRONMENT

Harmony with message and sender-receiver relationship
Noise (distractions)
  movement
  sound interference
  temperature discomfort
  threat to physical or mental security
Pressure to perform

# MEETINGS

| CAUSE | SOLUTION |
|---|---|
| 1.0 Why meet at all | 1.1 Know reason in advance |
| | 1.2 Cancel scheduled meetings with no business to consider |
| | 1.3 Maybe a written communication is better |
| 2.0 No objectives | 2.1 Plan agenda 48 hours in advance |
| 3.0 Too many items | 3.1 Prioritize and include only essential items |
| 4.0 Too many people | 4.1 Keep to maximum of 7 - 9 |
| 5.0 Not starting on time | 5.1 Put important items first; late people get info from someone else |
| | 5.2 Start on time--otherwise, tardiness is encouraged |
| 6.0 Poor leadership | 6.1 Maintain control |
| | 6.2 Stay on topic |
| | 6.3 Allow no tangents |
| 7.0 Not ending on time | 7.1 Minutes remaining clock |
| | 7.2 Use stand-up meeting |
| | 7.3 Have back-to-back meetings |
| 8.0 Interruptions during meeting | 8.1 Inform secretary of no interruptions |
| 9.0 Indecision | 9.1 Spend 80% on problem and 20% on solution. |
| 10.0 No follow-up | 10.1 Distribute minutes within 24 hours |
| | 10.2 Specify who does what by when |

---

A. Make meetings productive

B. Meeting do's

1. Well planned agenda based on priorities
2. Stay on target
3. Follow-up action plan available 24 hours after. Not chronological, but who is responsible for what by when. Use Task/Person Responsible/Deadline Date format. Keep it simple.

C. Attending meetings--use following tips:

1. Share responsibility for attending meetings with colleagues, charting who attends which meetings.
2. Arrive when your topic appears on agenda and leave after presentation.
3. Decide whether you have to be at the meeting; send someone else, or appear only for minutes involved.
4. Hold all calls and other interruptions so meeting may proceed as scheduled.

D. Meetings with boss

1. If too many interruptions in his/her office, asked to be excused and invite him/her to your office when free to continue discussion.
2. Alternative is to have boss call you when free of interruptions.
3. Must encourage others to respect your time as well as show respect for theirs.
4. Tell boss what action you propose, and unless you hear from him/her by a designated time, will execute proposed action.

# WHAT IS DECISION BY CONSENSUS?*

Consensus is a decision process for making full use of available resources and for resolving conflicts creatively. Consensus is difficult to reach, so not every ranking will meet with everyone's complete approval. Complete unanimity is not the goal -- it is rarely achieved. But each individual should be able to accept the group rankings on the basis of logic and feasibility. When all group members feel this way, you have reached consensus as defined here, and the judgement may be entered as a group decision. This means, in effect, that you can block the group if you think it's necessary; at the same time, you should use this option in the best sense of reciprocity. Here are some guidelines to use in achieving consensus:

1. Avoid arguing for your own rankings. Present your position as lucidly and logically as possible, but listen to the other members' reactions and consider them carefully before you press your point.

2. Do not assume that someone must win and someone must lose when discussion reaches a stalemate. Instead, look for the next-most-acceptable alternative for all parties.

3. Do not change your mind simply to avoid conflict and to reach agreement and harmony. When agreement seems to come too quickly and easily, be suspicious. Explore the reasons and be sure everyone accepts the solution for basically similar or complimentary reasons. Yield only to positions that have objective and logically sound foundations.

4. Avoid conflict-reducing techniques such as majority vote, averages, coin-flips, and bargaining. When dissenting members finally agree, don't feel that they must be rewarded by having their own way on some later point.

5. Differences of opinion are natural and expected. Seek them out and try to involve everyone in the decision process. Disagreements can help the group's decision because with a wide range of information and opinions, there is a greater chance that the group will hit upon more adequate solutions.

---

*From "Decisions, Decisions, Decisions," by Jay Hall.

## MEETING PLANNER

To: ____________________

From: ____________________ Date: __________

Date of Meeting: ____________________ Time: __________ Where: ____________________

Purpose of Meeting: ____________________

| Time Table | Agenda Topics | Decisions Made/ Actions to Take | Individual Responsible | Reporting or Target Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1. |  |  |  |
|  | 2. |  |  |  |
|  | 3. |  |  |  |
|  | 4. |  |  |  |

| Time Table | Agenda Topics | Decisions Made/ Actions to Take | Individual Responsible | Reporting or Target Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | 5. |  |  |  |
|  | 6. |  |  |  |
|  | 7. |  |  |  |
|  | 8. |  |  |  |
|  | 9. |  |  |  |

# GUIDELINES FOR GOAL-SETTING*

To set effective goals--goals which will carry you along the road to your definition of success--consider these characteristics. Are your goals:

1. Conceivable? It is understandable? From it, can you identify what the first step or two would be?

2. Believable? Few people can believe a goal that they have never seen achieved by someone else.

3. Achievable? Is your goal accomplishable with your given strengths and abilities?

4. Controllable? If your goal includes the involvement of anyone else, have you tested the waters beforehand?

5. Measurable? Is your goal stated so that it can be measured in time and quantity?

6. Desirable? Is your goal really something you want to do?

7. Stated with no alternatives? Set only one goal at a time. Even though you may set out for one goal, you may stop at any time and drop it for a new one. But when you change, you again state your goal without an alternative.

7. Growth-facilitating? Will your goal contribute to yourself, t to others, or to society.

* Adapted from Choose Success: How to Set and Achieve All Your Goals by Dr. Billy B. Sharp with Claire Cox, Hawthorne Books, New York, 1970

# More Resources

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## EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS PRESENTERS

(See "A Closer Look" and Conference Agenda)

**EARLY BIRD SPECIAL** - Coffee, Danish

| | |
|---|---|
| Tom Burns | (617)223-6814 |
| Mike Cohen | (202)254-5407 |

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS: "LEADERSHIP FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS"**

| | |
|---|---|
| Richard Hersh | (212)226-2246<br>118 10th St. NE<br>Washington, DC 20002 |

**FIRST A.M. SESSIONS**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Bob Carlson | (802)656-2132<br>University of VT<br>Burlington VT 05405 | DEFINING COMPONENTS OF SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS |
| Richard Lindgren | (203)647-3404<br>Illing Jr. High School<br>Manchester, CT 06040 | THE ROLE OF THE BUILDING PRINCIPAL IN EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS |
| Roy Loux | (207)784-6431<br>Auburn Public Schools<br>Box 800<br>Auburn, ME 04210 | SETTING SCHOOL POLICY FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS |
| Dennis Littky | (603)239-4381<br>Thayer Jr. Sr. High<br>Winchester, NH 03470 | THE SCHOOL AS A PROBLEM-SOLVING UNIT |
| | | HARD QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RESEARCH ON SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS |

**SECOND A.M. SESSIONS**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Jennifer Greene | H(401)789-9272<br>O(401)792-4167<br>University of Rhode Island<br>Kingston, RI 02881 | HIGHER EXPECTATIONS AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT |
| Dan Fleming | (617)546-2114<br>104 Meadowbrook<br>N. Chelmsford, MA<br>251-4873 | THE TEACHER AS MANAGER OF EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Katherine Baltzell | (617)492-7100 | HOW AMERICAN SCHOOL PRINCIPALS ARE SELECTED |
| Shirley Roberts<br>and<br>Robby Fried | (617)431-7823<br>(603)271-3330 | SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS |
| Bill Gauthier | (203)566-5079<br>CT Dept. Ed.<br>P.O. Box 2219<br>Hartford, CT 06115 | ASSESSING SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS |

## AFTERNOON SESSIONS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Buy Myers<br>and<br>Guest | (802)656-2030<br>University of VT | STRATEGIES FOR RURAL AND SMALL SCHOOL DISTRICTS |
| Bill Gauthier<br>and<br>Guest | (203)566-5029<br>CT Dept. Ed.<br>P.O. Box 2219<br>Hartford, CT 06115 | STRATEGIES FOR SUBURBAN AND MID-SIZE SCHOOL DISTRICTS |
| Rosalyn Oratz<br>and<br>Dennis McCarthy | (212)855-7760<br>New York City School Improvement Project<br>450 Pacific Street<br>Brooklyn, NY 11217 | STRATEGIES FOR URBAN AND LARGE SCHOOL DISTRICTS |

## PANEL DISCUSSION

STATE AND REGIONAL STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

| | |
|---|---|
| Daryl Hahn<br>Dept. Ed. and Cultural Services<br>Station 23<br>Augusta, ME 04333 | (207)289-2139 |
| John Davy<br>N.H. Dept. Ed.<br>64 N. Main St.<br>Concord, NH 03301 | (603)271-2657 |
| Tom Burns<br>U.S. Dept. Ed.<br>J.W. McCormack Bld.<br>Boston, MA 02109 | (607)223-6814 |
| Lynn Griesemer | |
| Marilyn Pedilino<br>Mass. Dept. Education<br>1385 Hancock St.<br>Quincy, MA 02169<br>770-7310 | |